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# HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN QUESTION TO 1885

BY

A. O. SARKISSIAN

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY PARENTS AND  
THREE OF THEIR CHILDREN WHO  
SHARED ONE FATE IN  
1915



## PREFACE

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The preface of a work is usually an apology and an acknowledgment. One apology the writer is ready to offer is that this study is not what he had planned it to be. Years ago he undertook the preparation of a History of the Armenian Question. Soon he realized that he had cast his net too wide, and was convinced that the faithful execution of his plan would require much more time and detailed study than is usually given to a graduate student. By 1934 he had already covered the subject in its first phase and then submitted the results of his studies (the first six chapters of the present work) to the departments of History and Political Science as a doctoral dissertation. Now, with some modifications of the original and by the addition of a chapter on the intellectual phase, it is offered to the press as a unitary fragment of the planned treatise.

The other apology is that, though this narrative is based upon a large variety of primary sources and secondary works, and though the writer has had unusual opportunities of availing himself of the counsels of his teachers and many learned friends, yet in a sense it is an uninhibited account of his own. Professor Simkhovitch's statement that "No matter what particular kind of material they [the historians] are dealing with, it is their mind which deals with that particular material,"<sup>1</sup> is no less true in this case than it would be in any other. For "moralizing" in a work of this kind he pleads guilty. He is, however, pleased to record that his critical estimate of certain British statesmen, the Congress of Berlin, and the diplomacy of the period has been sustained in the very recent studies by a number of scholars, including Professors David Harris, D. E. Lee, Seton-Watson, and Walter Wirthwein.<sup>2</sup>

"The expression of gratitude is a virtue and a pleasure," said Gibbon. But in the present instance it is hardly possible to express it severally to all persons who have encouraged and to the institutions that have aided the writer in the course of his study. First, he must pay his tribute to a host of writers on the subject, such as A. Alboyajian, T. Ananoun, the late H. B. F. Lynch, the late Professor Leo of the State University of Armenia, A. Saroukhan, the late M. Varandhian, and the late M. Tcheraz, whose works have been a source of inspiration. To the Director of the Library of the University of Illinois, Professor P. L. Windsor, and to his

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<sup>1</sup>"Approaches to History," *Political Science Quarterly*, XLV (1930), 481.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. chapter IV, pp. 68 *et seq.*, and chapter V with chapter I of *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878*, by David Harris, and especially with the "Preface," the chapters I and XII of Seton-Watson's *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*. Professor B. H. Sumner's valuable study, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880*, and M. Seropian's *The Armenian Question* (in Armenian) appeared after this work was ready for the press.

competent and loyal staff the writer owes deep gratitude. To the American Council of Learned Societies he owes more than an ordinary obligation for a Fellowship which enabled him to travel abroad and gather materials, some of which are incorporated in the last chapter. He is also under obligation to the directors and librarians of the Library of Congress, the Widener Library of Harvard University, the New York Public Library, the Library of the A. G. B. Union of Paris (Fondation Boghos Nubar Pacha), the Libraries of the Mekhitharist Monasteries of Venice and Vienna, the humble and learned Fathers of these institutions, certain persons of Moscow and Tiflis, the directors of the Miasnikian Library and the Library of the State University of Armenia (both of Erivan), the Librarian of the Gulbenkian Library and His Beatitude the Armenian Patriarch (both of Jerusalem). He acknowledges his overdue gratitude to the Gulbenkian family of New York for their aid and the many favors which provided access to some Armenian sources. To the editors of two Armenian papers, the *Baïkar* and the *Hairenik* (both of Boston), he also expresses his thanks for their advice and encouragement.

Indebtedness is gratefully acknowledged to certain members of the University faculty for scholarly encouragement and help. Professor J. A. Fairlie has always been ready to assist the writer in every way possible. Professor William Habberton has offered his gentle but genial advice upon various points. Mrs. William Habberton has been most conscientious in offering her valuable suggestions on the composition and style. Dr. G. L. LaFuze (now of the National Archives) performed the exacting but thankless task of proofreading in the early stages of the work. Professor A. H. Lybyer, under whose guidance this work began and upon whose constant encouragement it was carried on, has read the manuscript at various stages and has offered the benefit of his wise and sustained counsels. It is the writer's pleasant duty to acknowledge his gratitude and be aware of his obligation to them all.

Nor is it possible to forget "that tenth Muse," whose unfailing inspiration has been of as much value to the writer as that of the first Muse to many historians.

A. O. S.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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This helpless nation has seldom been permitted to enjoy the tranquillity of servitude.—EDWARD GIBBON.

The study of the Armenian Question as an offshoot of European diplomacy presupposes a study of that diplomacy in Europe and in the Near East. Such a study is sufficiently stupendous in itself without branching into its various details. The study of the Armenian Question as an important phase of the history of a people scattered far and wide in all parts of Asia Minor and surrounding countries also presupposes more than an examination of its political history during the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century. It includes an investigation in the intellectual, economic, social, and spiritual, as well as the political history of the people. Such an investigation, if carefully and faithfully done, should portray the life of the people in its attempt to retain its racial, national, and traditional purity and to regain its former independence. Thus the problem at once becomes doubly difficult since it necessitates researches in at least two entirely separate fields: a study of the people themselves throughout the period under consideration in their effort to attain spiritual and physical freedom, and a study of European diplomacy in the working of which the Armenians were to find (as they then thought) the indispensable means to attain that freedom. Much as one desires to detach and disentangle, untie and unravel, in an attempt to give the Question its proper setting, it cannot be adequately understood and appreciated unless both of these fields are investigated.

European diplomacy, like many of the ideas that are purely European in their origin, finds of course its full expression in Europe. It has also found ways of expression and has left its impress on all parts of the world. Yet perhaps no part of the world has felt its impact so long and its impress so profoundly as the area known as the Near East. All peoples living in the Near East have been affected and their fate and destiny modified by it, but it is no exaggeration to say that none of them has been so subjected to its whims and wiles, so much attracted by that *coquetterie occidentale* and yet so sadly disappointed, and so often duped and flouted and victimized by the working of that diplomacy as the Armenian people. Other peoples have also been duped and trapped in its working, yet in the end they all have obtained something in return. Such for instance is the case of the Greeks, the Serbs, the Lebanese, the Bulgarians, the Roumanians, and the Syrians and Arabs in Arabia and in Iraq, who, sooner or later, obtained local self-government, advanced to

autonomy, then became mere tributaries of the Porte, and finally attained, or presumably are about to attain, complete independence. Such is not the case of the Armenians, for their history was to take a turn decidedly different and truly tragic. Like the youngest son of a family in which the tradition of primogeniture prevails, whereby he is compelled to render services to the family in return for which he receives very little, the Armenian, it seems, appeared too late on the stage to reap the benefits of spiritual and nationalistic revival of the nineteenth century, but, with the machinations set up by European diplomacy, not too late to be its most ready and helpless victim.<sup>1</sup>

The term "Armenian Question" is of relatively recent coinage in our vocabulary as we understand its meaning, which precise meaning it acquired in the late seventies of the last century. Of course this does not mean that it took its rise *de novo* in the 'seventies. Only then it was adorned with the diplomatic varnish, garbed in a Western coat, and given its place in the solemn document of the Treaty of Berlin. The Question as such may easily be traced back—and this can be done without making any undue digression—to the conquest of the Armenian tableland by the Seljuk Turks and later by the Ottoman Turks.

More than four hundred years before the capture of Constantinople the invading forces of Tughrul, one of the earliest chieftains of the Seljuk family, had already overrun a good portion of Armenia. The succeeding invasions (especially the one under the leadership of Alp-Arslan in 1062) nearly completed the conquest of that portion of the country known as Armenia Major. These periodic invasions of Armenia by the incursions of Turkish hordes from the East were the first of a long series which did not stop until the reign of Shah Abbas I of Persia in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Mainly if not wholly because of these invasions the natives of the land began to leave the country and seek safety in other lands. At this early date a large group of Armenians—some 20,000 to 50,000 in all—took the long and arduous road which led them into Poland. Later, in the fourteenth century, when several more groups of Armenians migrated to that country the number was increased to some 200,000.<sup>2</sup> During this exodus some chose Transylvania and Moldavia as their abode,<sup>3</sup> while many more did not go

<sup>1</sup>The pithy couplet of Culivier-Fleury may well be repeated:

"Qui n'a pas l'esprit de son age  
De son age a tout la malheur."

He who has not the spirit of his age  
He has all the misfortune of his age.

<sup>2</sup>Varzhabedhian, V., *Memoirs of Zeitoun* (in Armenian), 111. The titles of all Armenian works will be given in English translation; for the original titles in Armenian, *vid.* the bibliography. For a detailed history of Armenian settlements in Poland, cf. Zaverian, H., "The Migration of Armenians to Poland and Their Internal Life," *Hairenik Monthly*, VII (1929), Nos. 5-6 and 9-12; Pezheshkian, M., *A Journey to Poland*; Alishan, L., *The Yearbook of the Armenians in Poland and Roumania*. (All in Armenian.)

<sup>3</sup>Macler, F., "Rapport sur une mission scientifique en Roumanie," *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, X (1930), 1-80; *idem*, "Rapport sur une mission scientifique en Galicie et en Bu-



beyond the confines of the Caucasus. A large group occupied a compact place in the peninsula of Crimea.<sup>4</sup> Again in 1239, as a result of the Mongol invasions, more and larger groups emigrated and scattered to various parts of Asia Minor. And of those who settled there one group in particular made a lasting effort to retain its independence, and founded a new Armenian kingdom.

After the invasion of Alp-Arslan this compact and presumably large group moved to southern Asia Minor and, among the mountain fastnesses of Taurus in Cilicia, in 1080 founded a new kingdom under a new dynasty. This kingdom, known as Armenia Minor and ruled by the Rhoupenian dynasty, maintained its precarious independence until its last king, Leo VI (to the Armenians known as Levon V), was carried away as a prisoner of war by the fierce Mamelukes of Egypt in 1375. Incidentally, it was this kingdom which was to render some signal services to the Crusaders, and no doubt a good portion of its 300 years' existence was due to the presence of the Crusaders in the East.<sup>5</sup>

Hardly had this kingdom passed out of existence than in the last decade of the fourteenth century Tamerlane showed his head in eastern Armenia, and by 1402 nearly all of Asia Minor (and of course Armenia) lay at the feet of the sixty-three year old conqueror. Another exodus of the Armenians from their homeland followed this invasion and this time the emigrants found refuge in Wallachia and the surrounding lands south of the Danube.<sup>6</sup> And finally, in 1603, when Shah Abbas I of Persia invaded Armenia, he also caused thousands of Armenian families to leave their homes and settle in Persia. A considerable number established themselves in northern Persia and founded a city of their own called New Julfa, while some others went far into south-central Asia where, in the course of time, they laid the foundations of Armenian colonies in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Batavia, and other places.<sup>7</sup>

These periodic, devastating invasions and conquests of Armenia by conquering war lords from the East easily explain why at the time of the

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kovine," VII (1927), 11-167, Sirouni, J., "Armenians in Roumania," *Hairenik Monthly*, VII (1929), Nos. 7-11; Babayan, L., *Armenians in Moldavia and Bukovina* (in Armenian); Iorga, N., "Sur l'origine des Arméniens de Moldavie," *Monumenta Armenologia*, 150-1; Dan, D., *Die Orientalischen Armenier in der Bukovina*.

<sup>4</sup>Coushnarian, C., *History of the Migration of Armenians to Crimea* (in Armenian).

<sup>5</sup>Gibbon was quite correct when he wrote: "The Christian kings [of this kingdom], who arose and fell in the thirteenth century on the confines of Cilicia, were the clients of the Latins, and the vassals of the Turkish Sultans of Iconium." But this can easily be explained by his additional statement: "This helpless nation has seldom been permitted to enjoy the tranquillity of servitude. From the earliest period to the present hour, Armenia has been the theatre of perpetual war." *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Bury ed., V, 168. *Vid.* also D'Avril, A., "Les Arméniens indépendants du Taurus," *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, II (1897), 11-32; Stubbs, W., "The Medieval Kingdoms of Cyprus and Armenia" in his *Medieval and Modern History*; Crabitès, P., *Armenia and the Armenians*; and Iorga, N., *Brève Histoire de la Petite Arménie*.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. works cited in note 3, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup>For a summary account of the invasion of Armenia by Shah Abbas I and subsequent events *vid.* Tournebize, F., "Shah Abbas I, roi de Perse et l'émigration forcée des Arméniens de l'Ararat" in the *Huschardean, Festschrift aus Anlass des 100 jährigen Bestandes der Mechitaristen Kongregation in Wien, 1811-1911*, 247-52. For the Armenians in Persia, *vid.* Arhakelian, H., *Armenians in Persia*; Arhakel of Tabriz, *History*, (both in Armenian). For the Armenians in India, Seth, M. H., *A History of the Armenians in India*.

capture of Constantinople a goodly number of Armenians were scattered in all parts of Asia Minor. They also explain why, even before the rulers of Turkey began to make use of the hideous means of massacres and expulsions, the Armenians could hardly constitute anything like a majority in their historic homeland.

In May, 1453, when Fathi Sultan Mohammed II (as he is known to his people) captured Constantinople, he desired to retain and revive the commercial life of the city, and he did, we are told,<sup>8</sup> all in his power to placate and keep such people within its walls as were in commercial pursuits. He even prohibited them to leave the city, and he encouraged Christian traders and businessmen from various parts of Asia Minor to come to establish their dwellings there. Thus, prompted by such motives, he "invited a large colony of Armenians from the city of Broussa to come and settle in Constantinople."<sup>9</sup> To make such a project signally successful he also invited the prelate of the Armenians of that city, Bishop Joachim, to come to Constantinople, and in 1461 appointed him the first Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. Thereupon he was vested with all the privileges and prerogatives which were granted to the Greek Patriarch a few years earlier.<sup>10</sup> These privileges and prerogatives included matters affecting the personal status of the members of these communities, such as marriage, inheritance, the founding of schools, hospitals, and other charitable institutions, and the levying of taxes for the support of these institutions as well as the administration of their own communal affairs.

The Patriarch came to be known as the *Millet Bashi*, meaning literally the head of the nation, while in Turkish connotation it simply meant the head of the community.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, he was to be the Patriarch "not only over the Armenians, but also over the Nestorians, the Jacobites, and in general over all the various non-orthodox eastern peoples (*sur tous les heterodoxes orientaux*)."<sup>12</sup> Thus he was placed over the head of the fol-

<sup>8</sup>Ozanian, G., *The Historic Role of Armenians in Armenia*, 95; Toumayian, G., *A History of the Eastern Question and an Introduction to the Armenian Question*, 388; Varandhian, M., *Introductory History of the Armenian Movement*, I, 158, (all in Armenian).

<sup>9</sup>Toumayian, *op. cit.*, 388.

<sup>10</sup>"By the command of the Conqueror," wrote Ubicini, (*Letters on Turkey*, II, 252), "Joachim Archbishop of Broussa removed, with a great number of Armenian families, to Constantinople where he was raised by Mohammed to the rank of Patriarch of his nation, with full authority over all Armenians established in Greece and Anatolia, and invested with rights and privileges similar to those which had been recently granted to the Greek Patriarch." *Vid.* also Ubicini, A., and Pavet de Courteille, A., *État présent de l'Empire Ottoman*, 200.

<sup>11</sup>The failure to differentiate this connotation has given rise to a curious interpretation. Thus those who claim that the Christians in Turkey had enjoyed far more privileges than they actually did went so far as to say that they in Turkey constituted an *imperium in imperio*. Thus reads the article on Armenia in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed.) by Sir C. W. Wilson, the resident British Consul-General in Armenia in 1880-1882. French writers, on the other hand, use the word "Millet" (meaning nation) and "communauté" interchangeably, perhaps often unconsciously ignoring the distinction. For instance, the two learned writers whose collaborated work is mentioned above translate the Turkish term "Ermeni Milleti" (literally the Armenian nation) as "Communauté Arménienne." In this instance of course it will not be taken as meaning the "Armenian nation." Turkish official documents never used the word "Millet" after the beginning of the eighteenth century; instead the word "djema'at" (meaning "community") was used. *Vid.* Steen de Jehay, V., *De la Situation légale des Sujets Ottoman non-Musulmans*, 83.

<sup>12</sup>Ubicini and Pavet de Courteille, *op. cit.*, 186-7.

lowers of various Christian creeds and he kept that position until 1829,<sup>13</sup> when a new head was created for the Armenian Catholic community, while still later, in 1845, a head was appointed for the Armenian Protestant community. Not until then did the Armenian Catholics or Protestants have any legal religious status in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>14</sup>

Now these privileges and prerogatives, somewhat far-reaching as they at first seem, did not give the Christians any more rights than they already had. While these seemed to be gracious concessions on the part of Mohammed II, yet he did not act out of regard for the well-being of the Infidels. Rather, he was confirming what had been the practice from the days of Justinian the Great.<sup>15</sup> Besides it was a very clever and thoughtful move on his part and one which at the same time proved to be most expedient. Voltaire's opinion about conquerors finds its application in this act of Mohammed II. "Conquerors have in all times spared the chiefs of religion," wrote the iconoclast,<sup>16</sup> "both on account of the tribute of flattery they are sure to receive from them, and because the submission of the head of the Church generally draws after it that of the people." It must have been manifest to Mohammed II that since the Infidels were placed without the pale of Moslem law, then they could and should manage their own affairs in their own accustomed ways. Indeed, it must have been deemed necessary to grant such privileges and make such concessions, since matters of marriage, inheritance, and other disputes among the Christians could not with justice be settled in Moslem courts. It will be a reiteration of the well-nigh outworn platitude to state that Moslem law, practiced in the Ottoman Empire as such, was neither in conformity with the law of reason nor that of nature. It was designed to be applied only to the faithful followers of the Prophet.<sup>17</sup> Since not all the subjects of this Mohammedan and non-secular state were Mohammedans—not even the majority, for that matter—then a means had to be found sufficiently expedient in attempting to solve such an intricate problem. Hence the happy idea of Mohammed II to grant the above-mentioned prerogatives and privileges. The notion that he did this out of humanitarian and just consideration and thus placed Christians, as against his own co-religionists, in a privileged position, is a legend of late nineteenth century origin.

Still another aspect of the subject should not be overlooked. These

<sup>13</sup>1830 according to Steen de Jehay, *op. cit.*, 248.

<sup>14</sup>Uhicini and Pavet de Courteille, *op. cit.*, 186-7.

<sup>15</sup>According to Sir E. Pears, Justinian gave the Armenians residing in Constantinople such privileges. *Vid. his Fall of Constantinople*, 144.

<sup>16</sup>*General History*, II, 160 (La Verité ed., 1901.)

<sup>17</sup>Brown, P. M., in his *Foreigners in Turkey* (page 5 and note) states that according to the letter of Koran "the conquered non-Moslems, might live in peace under Moslem jurisdiction by paying tribute (Kharadj)," but the payment of this invidious tax did not bring the non-Moslems within the Moslem jurisdiction. Nor were the non-Moslems given the benefit of that jurisdiction when in 1856 they were to pay the military exemption tax (Bedel-i-askerieh) which, according to the letter of the Hatt-i-Humayun but not actually, was to replace the tribute tax. On Kharadj cf. the article in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* by T. W. Juynboll.

privileges and prerogatives were of course voluntary and unilateral in scope and hence could be withheld at any time. And if during more than four centuries this was not done, it was not due to their desire not to harm their Christian subjects, but it was simply not deemed expedient to do so. In other words, it would not have been a paying proposition for these rulers to foster and initiate such moves. This did not, however, alter the nature of the Patriarchate and the precarious position of the Patriarch. While the Patriarch exercised, in some respects, a wider power than at the time of the Byzantine emperors, yet his relation to the Sultan was that of a slave. While the subject in the Christian community was endowed with extensive privileges, yet, as against the Moslem, he had no rights. In other words, as Professor Phillips has so eloquently stated:

The Catholics in Ireland and Protestants in Austria might envy him his privileges [to exercise] his religion, to educate himself as he pleased, to accumulate wealth, . . . yet he remained essentially a slave, liable at any moment, by some caprice of greed or suspicion on the part of his master to be hurled from wealth and power into penury or death.<sup>18</sup>

This is the side of the subject that has been sadly overlooked by so many ambitious and voluminous yet often shortsighted writers.<sup>19</sup> Almost invariably they have emphasized the wide and sweeping scope of the privileges without going into the nature of these privileges.

Thus with a patriarchal head, shrouded in prerogatives and its members vested with such privileges, the Armenian communities were to live within the bounds of the Ottoman Empire quietly and peacefully for more than four centuries. It is no exaggeration to say that during these many years of subjugation and servitude the Armenians were the most pacific and perhaps the most industrious of all the racial and ethnic elements of the Empire. There were bloody insurrections, such as during the revolts of the Djelalis in the first decade of the seventeenth century, in which the Armenians were subjected to inhuman treatment, yet they would not side with the revolting groups. With the beginning of the nineteenth century the Empire was threatened by both internal enemies (the Serbs) and external foes (the Russians); and still later the Greeks unfurled the flag of revolt and eventually attained their independence. In the 'thirties the audacious Mehemet Ali of Egypt challenged his master the Sultan, and no sooner was the latter saved from this deadly attack (with the aid of the Powers), than in the late 'forties the Kurds arose under the leadership of the gallant Beder-Khan, and defying the authority of the Porte, fought to maintain their semi-independent status and in this struggle even

<sup>18</sup>*Cambridge Modern History*, X, 170-1.

<sup>19</sup>For instance, Sir C. W. Wilson's article in the *Britannica* referred to above; *vid.* p. 7, note 11. In this connection cf. also "Turkey Denounces Five Centuries of Colonialism," *Current History*, XVII (1923), 749-57, the rather untenable Turkish view as expressed at the Lausanne Conference on Dec. 12, 1927. No less tenable is A. Rachid's view in his article, "Les Droits minoritaires en Turquie dans le passé et le présent," *Rev. Gén. de Dr. Int. Public*, XLII (1935), 293-311.

sought the aid of the Armenians.<sup>20</sup> But nothing could shake the Armenians from the political inertness into which they had fallen. One historian<sup>21</sup> wrote: "during the nineteenth century, when excitement reigned in almost every part of the Turkish Empire, the history of the Armenians remained singularly uneventful." "Why," asked another distinguished authority<sup>22</sup> in 1877, "do the Armenians not rise in rebellion?" And he answered the question according to his understanding: "Because ages of slavery have broken the spirit of the nation." Because of their own selfish consideration, or their lack of courage and confidence, or their willingness to endure the burdensome yoke of the Porte for some time to come and their readiness to associate their lot with the Turks rather than embark upon the dangerous road of insurrection, or their awareness that such adventures would end in disasters if not in actual tragedies—to whichever one or more of these factors the historian may ascribe the inactivity of the Armenians during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, yet he cannot fail to give them credit for being peaceful and loyal subjects of ungrateful, unworthy, and, in many ways, inhuman masters. With a resignation characteristic of the Eastern Christians at that time, combined with the determination of ascetics, they led a desultory, precarious, and dangerous life; and, while drunk with the false optimism that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," they seemed to be contented with such a life. Not that, one might say, they knew no better, but they perhaps realized that nothing better was to be had without great sacrifices—sacrifices reserved for the experience of their not distant descendants.

Legally and juridically the Ottoman State was a theocracy, while in reality it was an autocracy; and as such, one may grant that it was probably no worse than some autocracies found elsewhere. But autocracy combined with the worst form of corrupt government, carried on by the most inefficient of public servants, necessarily gives rise to something much worse than either simple autocracy or theocracy. That in itself was bad enough, but it was the anomalous and decidedly peculiar juridical features of this theocratic state that made the situation far worse. A great deal may be said for the theocratic system founded upon the exclusive precepts of Moslem law. In the eyes of such a system the followers of all other creeds are considered, for all practical purposes, Infidel outlaws and placed outside of its jurisdiction. But the system could not be

<sup>20</sup>This insurrection and its relation to the Armenian people has been dealt with in detail by G. Sassouni in a series of articles in the *Hairenik Monthly* (in Armenian) for 1929-30. An abstract of these articles is printed in the *Social Science Abstracts*, II (1930), #11472. Cf. also Brant, J., "Notes of a Journey through a Part of Kurdistan in the Summer of 1838," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, X (1841), 341-430, and Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, A., *Armenien*, 102-103.

<sup>21</sup>Gooch, G. P., *Lectures on the History of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by F. A. Kirkpatrick, 287.

<sup>22</sup>Bryce, J., *Transcaucasia and Ararat*, 344 (4th ed.).

acclaimed as just and judicious, since it could not provide any justice worthy of the name. One specific feature of this juridical system was that it did not admit the testimony of an Infidel—a feature which was bound to give rise to innumerable conflicts between Mohammedans and non-Mohammedans in their daily dealings. The reason why much testimony could not be accepted is stated clearly and frankly even by Moslem juridical scholars on the assumption that it is the testimony of an unbeliever; that such testimony will be biased as the testimony of a slave for or against his master (this is the true spirit in which Moslems regarded the Christians); and that it is invalid because those who offer such testimony are not within the Moslem law. Such reasoning, if devoid of natural morality, has the merit of stark clarity.

This feature of the law in itself was bad enough, but there were other prejudicial and discriminatory disabilities under which non-Moslems were placed, and impositions which were levied upon them only, that made the situation intolerable. One of these was the barring of non-Moslems from the army and government services. It is true that now and then a wise Sultan, such as Mahmud II, might resort to the indispensable counsel of his non-Moslem subjects, or at times high diplomatic posts might be given to them,<sup>23</sup> but these favors were bestowed only incidentally. Such disabilities as well as the imposition of the tribute-tax were to have been abolished in their entirety by the provisions of both the Hatt-i-Humayun of 1856 and the Hatt-i-Sherif of Gulhane of 1839. But, as is true with other reform measures and promises, these were not carried out. For example, as the edict of 1856 provided for the admission of the Christians into the army, it also provided that they might be exempted from such services by paying a fixed exemption tax (*Bedel-i-askerieh*). Thereupon, curiously enough, this extra imposition was levied upon the Christian subjects of the Porte without relieving them from the tribute-tax.<sup>24</sup> Still another and almost inhuman provision of the Moslem law was that a Christian, after having sworn his intention to embrace Islam, was punished by death if any attempt was made to revert to Christianity.<sup>25</sup>

Thus thrown outside the pale of the law, subjected to an unequal system of taxation, and suffering under a system of tax-farming that had shown its notoriously corrupt features in all lands and at all times; barred from the military, naval, and other government services; not permitted to

<sup>23</sup>This was especially true when negotiations had to be carried on with a Christian state. This was done, however, not only for the purpose of availing the Empire of the services of such subjects, but also for an entirely different reason. It was thought that these men would find it easy to please the representatives of the Powers; that if, as a result of a negotiation, the honor of Islam should be compromised, then the onus could easily be thrown upon the non-Moslem subjects; and that whatever might be done by them could easily be repudiated by the Porte. *Vid.* Woodward, E. L., *Peace Handbook No. 154*, p. 25. (Issued by the Foreign Office.)

<sup>24</sup>Ubicini and Pavet de Courteille, *op. cit.*, 8.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 5-6; Young, G., *Corps de Droit Ottoman*, II, 11-12.

bear arms at a time and in a land where his nomadic and marauding neighbor was armed to the teeth; his family exposed to the unlicensed brutality of these neighbors for which there was no redress; the native Christian of the Ottoman Empire, especially if he dwelt in the Eastern provinces of Asia Minor, led a life that was quite different from that of his Mohammedan neighbor.<sup>26</sup> "Apologists of Turkey," wrote the Duke of Argyll,<sup>27</sup> "are very apt to plead that the oppression of its Government affects the Moslem as much as the Christian population. Even if this were true, it would be a strange plea in arrest of judgment. But, it is not true, . . . . The Christian subjects of the Porte are exposed to miseries from which their Moslem fellow-subjects are almost, if not entirely, exempt. And these miseries affect them in the most sacred of all human interests—the honor of their families." Of these intolerable conditions the Western world knew very little and that little had come through the mouths or writings of some chance travellers. These constitute, in many instances, the sole contemporary works on seventeenth and early eighteenth century Turkey. Of course all of these are fragmentary in nature, but many are very valuable. Yet if our knowledge of the conditions of that period is incomplete, we know infinitely more of the conditions as they existed during the nineteenth century—of which more will be said later. Now we shall turn to another matter which deserves some careful treatment at this juncture—the subject of capitulations.

In ordinary parlance among international lawyers the word "capitulations" signifies agreements concluded between a state or a number of states and the Porte by which the latter agreed to permit the citizens and subjects of the former to be exempt from Ottoman jurisdiction while within the bounds of that Empire. In general, though not in all particulars, they embodied the old Roman notion of carrying the personal law, *jus civile*, wherever the Roman citizen went, and this was deemed convenient since the *jus gentium*, as understood in European states, did not obtain its application in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>28</sup> The term was used in its present connotation in 1535 when Suleiman II, "in order to give Francis I of France a proof of his affection for the latter and without

<sup>26</sup>Here the writer wishes at once to enter a protest and express his disagreement with all those writers who hastily yet unblushingly state that the Christians as well as the Mohammedans of the Empire were suffering to the same extent under a corrupt system. Such is the import of E. M. Earle's statement which reads: "In portraying conditions in the old Ottoman Empire, . . . they [the missionaries] failed to point out that many of the sufferings of the Christian minorities were shared *in toto* by their Turkish compatriots. If the Armenian peasant was exposed to raids of Kurdish brigands, so was the Turkish peasant . . . . And in addition, the Turk alone was condemned until 1909 to the compulsory service in the Imperial Ottoman Army, from which the Christian was exempt, . . . ." *Foreign Affairs*, VII (1929), 417. Such a conclusion arrived at by this or any other scholar does not seem to be warranted; for it can neither be justified nor substantiated.

<sup>27</sup>*The Eastern Question*, I, 53-4.

<sup>28</sup>It is not correct that the term acquired its meaning and this particular connotation from the word "capitulate." The chapters or the headings (*caput*, *capitula*) into which these stipulations were crowded first were known under the Italian form "capitulazione" and later the modern English and French forms became common, *Vid.* Brown, *op. cit.*, 29 and note; Bentwich, N., "The End of the Capitulatory System," *British Year Book of International Law*, XIV (1933), 89 and note.

solicitation by the latter," accorded his subjects capitulatory privileges.<sup>29</sup> This was renewed periodically and almost regularly, as in the years 1569, 1581, 1604, 1618, 1624, 1640, 1684, 1673, and 1740, confirming the old privileges and at the same time making some additions, especially concerning religious matters and the Holy Places.<sup>30</sup> In the nature of the case at first all concessions made through capitulations have been regarded, in principle at least, as "gracious concessions" on the part of the Porte, to be withheld and revoked at its pleasure. In later years, however, as these concessions came to be embodied in formal treaties, they lost their unilateral character and became bilateral contracts. So much as to the nature and the origin of the capitulations. Now let us examine the motives which led the European states to seek and obtain such "gracious concessions" from the Porte, for this phase of the subject is more important in the present connection than can be seen at first glance.

In an earlier part of this chapter something was said about the Moslem juridical system and its failure to be applied to communities composed of non-Mohammedans. Christian testimony, it was stated, was not admitted in Ottoman courts—and these were the only duly recognized courts within the Empire. Under these circumstances it was not possible for a non-Mohammedan to obtain justice in a court where his testimony or that of his co-religionists would be held invalid. So it was perfectly logical for states whose subjects were considered Infidels in the courts of Turkey to ask that their subjects be tried and that cases in which these were involved be adjudicated in their consular courts.<sup>31</sup> Looking at the matter from this angle—an angle from which very few writers have attempted to look—and stripped of its trade, commercial, and monopolistic garb, there seems to be nothing illogical, at least in principle, in the adoption and execution of the principles embodied in the capitulatory treaties. Thus, while the entire system can be condemned in many respects and in all lands, yet special circumstances such as these will make it less easy to abandon and abrogate such concessions without bringing about radical changes in the *corpus juris* of the country concerned.<sup>32</sup> On this ground the capitulatory regime as it existed in Turkey cannot be condemned and denounced with the same argument as that by which the extraterritorial

<sup>29</sup>It may be well to note that this was not the first of the capitulations contracted between the Porte and a European monarch. What was true in this case is that it conferred more extensive privileges and extended the scope of the earlier capitulations. *Vid.* Pradier-Fodéré, P., "La Question des Capitulations," *Revue de Droit International et de Législation Comparée*, I (1869), 118-37.

<sup>30</sup>This initiative taken by France was later followed up by the other states as it was natural for them to do. England obtained such privileges in 1580 and the agreement was subsequently renewed; Austria obtained the same through the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 for Austrians, Venetians, Poles and Hungarians; Russia obtained similar concessions by the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji in 1774; the United States and Belgium were given the same by the treaties of 1830 and 1848 respectively. *Vid.* Pradier-Fodéré, *loc. cit.*

<sup>31</sup>The most detailed work on the courts and judicial system in general is that of Mandelstam, A. N., *La Justice Ottomane dans ses Rapports avec les Puissances Étrangères*.

<sup>32</sup>Bringing about such changes is suggested by Brown, *op. cit.*, 112.



regime is denounced in other countries.<sup>33</sup> There is, however, yet another matter which was intertwined with the capitulations, rather was their offshoot. This is the right of protection claimed by a power or a group of powers over their co-religionists in the Ottoman Empire. And the study of this deserves emphasis and space because it is important in connection with this work.

In the early capitulatory agreements nothing was said concerning such protective rights. Only it was definitely stated in the several treaties that missionaries were free to go into the Ottoman Empire, and it was tacitly understood that the Ottoman subjects who embraced the faith of the missionaries would also be free to follow their creed without being molested by Ottoman authorities. Of course it is quite natural that an Ottoman subject who broke away from his own particular sect and joined the incoming missionary felt himself more safe under the aegis of a foreigner who was immune from Ottoman jurisdiction. But that did not mean—and it never meant—that he was to enjoy capitulatory privileges and immunities which were granted to foreigners.<sup>34</sup> Later, in the course of the eighteenth century, when capitulatory treaties were renewed in expanded form, such as the one with France in 1740, it was explicitly stated (as in Art. 32 of the above treaty) that more consideration was to be given to missionaries and the Holy Places. Still later, in 1774, the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji stipulated that a new Greek Orthodox Church might be built at Galata (in Constantinople) under the protection of the Russian minister, on behalf of which as well as of all other churches he might make representations, which were to be taken into friendly consideration by the Porte.<sup>35</sup> It is not at all correct, however, as one writer eagerly copies the opinion,<sup>36</sup> that "Russia had in the Ottoman Empire more than seven million Greeks and Armenians of Ottoman nationality under her protection." But we need to pursue the subject somewhat further in our attempt to locate the source of the above confusion and the resulting misunderstanding.

<sup>33</sup>The two most recent works on the capitulatory regime—Abi-Chahla, H., *L'Extinction des Capitulations en Turquie et dans les Régions Arabes*, and Sousa, N., *The Capitulatory Regime of Turkey*—seem to neglect this phase of the subject. The authors of these works as well as many others treat the matter as a non-conformity in the smooth working of a judicial system in Turkey, as well as in the sphere of public international law, and they almost invariably denounce it in the principle and in its working as a hangover from an age that has come to an end.

<sup>34</sup>This fact has often been confused even by the most learned and careful scholars. Thus Bentwich writes (*loc. cit.*, 90): "... a number of the permanent inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire received the same immunities [capitulatory immunities] by reason of membership in Christian religious communities, Orthodox or Latin, which were placed under the aegis of the Russian or the French sovereigns respectively." And Owen Tweedy of the *Times* goes one better in his statement (*Current History*, XXXII, June, 1930, 526): "Protected by the capitulations, they [the Greeks and Armenians] had exceptional privileges, both in trade and in general conduct of life, of which they naturally made the most."

<sup>35</sup>Arts. 7 and 14 of the said treaty; *vid.*, Holland, T. E., *The Treaty Relations of Russia and Turkey, 1774-1853*, p.

<sup>36</sup>Sousa, *op. cit.*, 98. He quotes from Pellissé du Rausas, G., *Le Régime des Capitulations dans l'Empire Ottoman*, II, 34, and the author cites the *Archives du Ministère des affaires étrangères*, t. CCXIV, fo. 248, but a study and examination of the treaty itself, in the *ipsissima verba*, indicates nothing which will excuse a careful student's making such a sweeping statement.

Westlake<sup>37</sup> states (after quoting Marcy's well-known declaration<sup>38</sup>) that "a remarkable example of the practice [of protection] is offered by the protection which France extends to Roman Catholic establishments in the East, irrespective of the true nationality of the persons who may belong to them." But it is important in this connection to bear in mind that these establishments were founded and financed by the subjects of France. It is no doubt true that some Christian natives of Turkey who desired to avail themselves of the capitulatory privileges might, upon the payment of a sum to a foreign representative, claim and become the *protégé* of that foreign power.<sup>39</sup> It may also be true that a self-asserting ambassador or a consul might claim protection over such persons; yet it must emphatically be stated that neither this bribery of the consuls nor their arrogant and aggressive attitude placed these natives of Turkey under foreign protection and jurisdiction. Thus, however loudly and ostentatiously might the foreign ambassador or the minister boast for having extorted so much cash from the Ottoman subjects as payments for conferring upon them capitulatory immunities,<sup>40</sup> in reality it made no difference as far as the Ottoman law, and what is more important, the working of that law, was concerned. But, as the Porte was unwilling to concede so much to the Powers, then the latter insisted that reforms be introduced so as to bring the Christian elements of the Empire to a legal equality with the Mohammedan elements. The result was the reform movement with which we are to deal, for it was with reforms—especially in the later phases of reforms—that the Armenian Question is inextricably blended. Reforms gave the Armenian Question its political coloring; it was as a part of the general reform project that the Armenian Question was raised from its semi-secular and purely internal status to the dignity of European politics and international diplomacy. Hence the study of reforms in this connection deserves a place and emphasis of its own.

The reform movement in the Ottoman Empire is not new; it goes back to the seventeenth century. As early as 1622 Osman II dreamed of reforms for Turkey, and especially reforms in the Army.<sup>41</sup> But the reform movement which concerns us mainly is that of the nineteenth century, for then reform meant somewhat a different thing than in the seventeenth

<sup>37</sup>*International Law*, 206-207 (1910 ed.).

<sup>38</sup>"By the laws of Turkey and other Eastern nations," wrote Secretary of State Marcy in connection with Kosztá's case on Sept. 26, 1853, "the consulates therein may receive under their protection strangers and sojourners whose religion and social manners do not assimilate with the religion and manners of those countries." *H. & S. Ex. Doc.* 1: 33 Cong., 1 Sess., 44-5. These sojourners were all known as Franks and they all could seek French protection as was provided in Arts. 4 and 5 of the capitulation Treaty of 1604. *Vid.* Noradounghian, G., *Recueil d'Actes Internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman*, I, 94-5. But this did not apply to native non-Moslems of Turkey.

<sup>39</sup>A careful study of the *protégé* system is that of Arminjon, P., *Étrangers et Protégés dans l'Empire Ottoman*.

<sup>40</sup>Rey, F., *La Protection diplomatique et consulaire dans les Échelles du Levant et de Barbarie*, 265.

<sup>41</sup>Bérard, V., *La Révolution Turque*, 15.

century. Then too, during the nineteenth century reform meant various things to different elements of the Empire as well as to the several Powers, who insisted upon the introduction of certain reforms. To the Turk it meant primarily the reorganization of the army and the navy so as to prevent his Empire from falling to pieces; it meant the overhauling of his decadent governing institutions so as to maintain his mastery over all his subject peoples. To the non-Turks, and especially to the Christians, it meant the introduction of an equitable system of taxation, a more humane way of collecting the taxes, the admission of Christians into the military, naval, and civil services of the Empire, and the equality of all the subjects of the Empire before the law, or at least the admission of Christian testimony in courts. To the English statesman reform meant in many respects the same things as to the Turks (though many pious ones among them wished that it were possible to improve the wretched conditions of the rayahs, of the Christians, in Turkey), but for an entirely different purpose. They wanted the Turkish Empire to become and remain powerful as an effective bulwark against the colossus of the North—Russia. This was especially true during the Palmerstonian era,<sup>42</sup> and was more emphatically insisted upon in the 'seventies by Disraeli. To the Russian it meant the introduction of such reforms as would be beneficial to the Christians, so that the latter would look upon him as their deliverer, as he certainly seemed to be until he showed his hand in the Bulgarian affairs in the 'eighties. But at all times prior to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, whenever the Powers demanded reforms and stipulated in the several treaties the introduction of such reforms, they meant reforms for the European provinces of Turkey alone. (Excepting of course the special status which was granted to the Lebanese.) Even when the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) and still later that of Paris stipulated such reforms, neither meant reforms that were to apply to all parts of Turkey (though the latter included reforms in general). This idea of limiting such reforms to European Turkey was so firmly accepted by the statesmen of the Powers that even at the Conference of Constantinople in 1876-77, when reform proposals were submitted to the Porte in the form of a demand, they did not want to be concerned with the affairs in other parts of the Empire. They were quite clear on this matter, for when several attempts were made by the Armenians to have the Conference concern itself with their fate, the attempts met a categorical refusal. Thus it is safe to say that the fate of the non-Turk subjects of the

<sup>42</sup>For a good article written from the British point of view on British policy towards reforms in Turkey *vid.* Temperley, H., "British Policy towards Parliamentary Rule and Constitutionalism in Turkey, 1830-1914," *Cambridge Historical Journal*, IV (1933), 156-91. For Palmerston's efforts to inject new blood into this defunct Empire, *vid.* Rodkey, F. S., "Lord Palmerston and the Rejuvenation of Turkey, 1830-41," *Journal of Modern History*, I (Dec., 1929), 570-93, and II (1930), 193-225.

Ottoman Empire in its Asiatic provinces was never seriously taken up by the statesmen of Europe. And it is of course equally true that as far as European diplomacy was concerned the Armenian Question had its rise in Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin, as its death knell was sounded, again be it noted, as far as European diplomacy is concerned, by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

None of the treaties concluded between the Porte and the several Powers prior to the nineteenth century stipulated anything concerning reforms affecting internal affairs of Turkey, and especially the conditions of the non-Mohammedan elements of the Empire. Nor did the Powers regard it their business to suggest such things, since their own subjects were always and duly protected by means of capitulatory immunities. They seem to have had a very remote interest in the conditions of these rayahs in Turkey. In 1814 when the Serbs sought the mediation of the Congress of Vienna on their behalf the Powers would not undertake it even though Russia—the guardian angel of the Serbs—was “pre-eminently powerful” in that Congress.<sup>43</sup> By the time of the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), however, at least Russia had definitely set her heart on the matter of reforms affecting the conditions of the rayahs. By that treaty (Arts. 5 and 6) and in a separate act of the same date the Porte promised to treat the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia more like a suzerainty than a sovereignty and promised to issue Hatt-i-Sherifs to be applied to Serbia.<sup>44</sup> These were the somewhat sweeping provisions of which the Duke of Wellington remarked “as the death-blow to the independence of the Ottoman Porte, and the forerunner of the dissolution and extinction of its powers.”<sup>45</sup> The promise to issue Hatt-i-Sherifs was carried out on three different occasions, and by the second of these (issued in August, 1830) Serbia was given autonomy.<sup>46</sup>

With the issuance of these Hatts (beginning in 1829 rather than in 1839, in which year the Hatt-i-Sherif of Gulhane was issued) Turkey embarked on the road of reforms which, if faithfully carried out, would have come to its climax in 1876 instead of in the Revolution of 1908. But as there was neither the will nor (as it then seemed) the power to execute reforms in any degree, she became otherwise distinguished for her failure to carry any of them out to their execution rather than in her attempt to do so. And, in the nature of things, this had to be the course of reforms, since the rulers and men in charge of the administrative affairs of Turkey (with a few singular exceptions) never intended to carry out reforms even if they were expressly stipulated in solemn international

<sup>43</sup>Phillimore, Sir Robert, *Commentaries upon International Law*, I, 630-1 (3rd ed.).

<sup>44</sup>This was already stipulated in the Treaty of Ackerman in 1826; *vid.* Holland, *The Treaty Relations of Russia and Turkey*, 21; Noradounghian, *op. cit.*, II, 170-1.

<sup>45</sup>Quoted in Holland, *Treaty Relations of Russia and Turkey*, 22, from *Despatches, Second Series*, IV.

<sup>46</sup>Noradounghian, *op. cit.*, II, 187-200.

treaties. The device of reforms, at least the kind of reforms the introduction of which was desired by the Powers, was to serve in the hands of Turks as a mere claptrap, a camouflage, to allay an impending danger. One international authority wrote in 1895:

If pressed very hard by European diplomacy, the Porte will appear to yield, and promise much, then plead difficult circumstances which require time for the execution of what it has promised, and when events in other parts of the world divert the attention of European cabinets from Turkey, it will try to evade the reforms altogether.<sup>48</sup>

Thus it was quite easy to issue firmans and iradehs as solemn proclamations emanating from the Sublime Porte when the country was in fear of being invaded or attacked by a power which was anxious to safeguard the interests of its co-religionists, but it was neither simple nor was it deemed proper to enforce the measures embodied in these proclamations as soon as the impending danger had disappeared. Such indeed, were the tricks to which the Porte resorted so often. In 1839 the famous Hatt-i-Sherif was issued in order to placate the Powers which had given the Porte a new lease on life by curbing the powers of Mehemet Ali. But the shrewdest observer of Turkish affairs at this time (Moltke) wrote in a letter of Sept. 1, 1839:

The reforms consisted chiefly in externals, in names and projects. The army was created on a European plan, with Russian tunics, a French code, Belgian guns, Turkish turbans, Hungarian saddles, English sabres, and drill sergeants of every nation, and constituted a force in which the leaders were recruits and the recruits were enemies of the day before.<sup>49</sup>

In June, 1853, when the impending Russian aggression was becoming real and when the sultan realized the necessity of England's help, he graciously extended more privileges to the Protestants in order to ingratiate himself with that Power.<sup>49</sup> Still later, when she was actually at war with Russia, another firman was issued in February, 1854, by which Christian testimony was to be admitted in the courts.<sup>50</sup> So it was, from the 'thirties down to the turn of the century, that a kind of see-saw was being played between a Power or a group of Powers and the Porte, while Christian subjects of the latter were being victimized under the most oppressive government in existence. More than two sides were involved in this game. As opposed to the Porte, there was one group (always headed by England) which, while it insisted on certain types of reforms, staunchly championed the integrity and the independence of the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>48</sup>Geffcken, F. H., *Nineteenth Century*, XXXVIII (Dec., 1895), 993-4. *Vid.* also Bérard, *op. cit.*, 29, and Engelhardt, E., *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, I, 4.

<sup>49</sup>*Briefe aus der Türkei*, 440. (1917 edition.)

<sup>50</sup>Imperial Firman of June, 1853, *vid.* *British and Foreign State Papers*, XLV (1854-55), 799.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 802. "This Firman," wrote Redcliffe, "calculated as it is to remove the most crying injustice under which the Rayahs of the Empire have laboured for centuries. . . ." *Ibid.*, 799.

There was another group whose views were always expressed by Russia (she indeed was alone in that role most of the time) which insisted on reforms irrespective of the status of the Empire. Yet they all extended their sympathy to the subject races while at the same time watching with jealousy the encroachment made upon that Empire by any one of them. This jealousy and sympathy found expression in a series of treaties which are properly termed by Holland a sort of *corpus juris publici orientalis*,<sup>51</sup> by the terms of which, on the one hand the Turkish Empire was placed under the tutelage of Europe, and on the other hand the claim of any single power to settle the destinies of that Empire without the concurrence of the rest had been repeatedly blocked.<sup>52</sup> This blundering policy of the Powers, more than anything else, may amply explain why none of them could come to the rescue of the Christians in Turkey (and especially in Asiatic Turkey) when this unfortunate people was being butchered by the henchmen of the Sultan.

Prior to the Crimean War and following the Hatt-i-Sherif of Gulhaneh some other attempts were made at some reforms, but these were inconsequential and should not detain us.<sup>53</sup> But the reforms generated at the time and following the Crimean War are important because of their solemn nature as a part of the Treaty of Paris. Then, as a result of this treaty and "through the influence of Palmerston,"<sup>54</sup> Turkey was admitted within the comity of European nations, with the specific understanding that she would introduce certain reforms and carry out those already promised. (Nearly all reforms thus stipulated were also found in the decree of 1839.)

These reforms of 1856 had their origins in the Anglo-French alliance with the Porte made in 1854 (March). On that occasion the Sultan promised certain engagements,<sup>55</sup> which were embodied in the Firman of February 18, 1856. In May, 1855, the Sultan actually issued a decree by which he authorized the recruiting of a contingent force from among his Christian subjects.<sup>56</sup> Only a few months before this (February, 1855), a preliminary convention, signed at Vienna to provide the bases of the peace, contained a distinct proposition concerning the immunities of the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire (*immunities des populations chrétiennes de l'Empire ottoman*, Engelhardt, *op. cit.*, I, 124). But the government of Turkey gave more importance to the other parts of the

<sup>51</sup>Jasmund, J., *Aktenstücke zur orientalischen Frage* is a valuable collection of these documents.

<sup>52</sup>Holland, T. E., *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, 2.

<sup>53</sup>Eichmanns, F., *Die Reformen des osmanischen Reiches* contains these various reform measures.

<sup>54</sup>Thompson, G. C., *Public Opinion and Lord Beaconsfield, 1875-1880*, II, 377. "His [Palmerston's] idea," wrote Bagehot (*Works*, IV, 331; Barrington ed.), "his fixed idea, was that the Turks were a highly improving and civilized race, and it was impossible to beat into him their essential barbaric and unindustrial character."

<sup>55</sup>Bérard, *op. cit.*, 46-7.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*

convention than to this particular part.<sup>57</sup> In the protocol of another conference (held at Vienna on April 9, 1854) it was stated that Great Britain, France, Austria, and Prussia "remain united in consolidating in an interest so much in conformity with the sentiments of the Sultan, and by every means compatible with the Independence and Sovereignty the Civil and Religious Rights of the Christian subjects of the Porte."<sup>58</sup>

From these steps which we have traced in a cursory manner it becomes quite obvious that the Hatt-i-Humayun was a part of the numerous agreements made between the several Powers and the Porte which culminated in the Treaty of Paris. It is not, therefore, altogether incorrect to say that the Hatt-i-Humayun was extracted from the Porte by the Powers gradually and by degrees instead of its being a spontaneous and gracious concession on the part of the Sultan.

In the Treaty of Paris the Powers agreed to respect "the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire" (Art. 7) and the Sultan issued a firman in which was recorded "his generous intentions towards the Christian populations of his Empire, . . ." (Art. 9). Further on the second paragraph of the same article added that "the Contracting Powers recognize the high value of this communication [firman]. It is clearly understood that it cannot, in any case, give to the said Powers the right to interfere, either collectively or separately, in the relations of His Majesty the Sultan with his subjects, nor in the internal administration of his Empire."<sup>59</sup> Therein by that addition of Article 9 it seems that the Powers had given up the task which they had arrogated to themselves. It was concerning this last sentence that the historian Fyffe wrote: "The helmsman was given his course; the hatches were battened down. [By this treaty] the Christian subjects of the Sultan had for the future, whatever might be their wrongs, no redress to look for but in the exertion of their own power."<sup>60</sup> But by these guarantees and promises the Powers were to assume a "most serious responsibility" to uphold the government of Turkey, though the hope that Turkey might be able to carry out these promises and stipulations as regards the reforms was at best only a sanguine expectation.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, the Powers

<sup>57</sup>"... le gouvernement turc leur [the other parts] attribuai plus d'importance qu'à l'amélioration du sort des rayas et qu'il comptait sur un accord européen aussi rigoureux pour son ennemi que flatteur pour l'orgueil musulman." Engelhardt, *op. cit.*, I, 124.

<sup>58</sup>Hertslet, E., *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, II, 1191.

<sup>59</sup>The treaty was signed on March 30; the firman was issued on Feb. 18 and communicated to the Powers before the signature of the treaty.

<sup>60</sup>*Modern Europe*, III, 234-5. "... no democratic platitudes were ever more palpably devoid of connection with fact, more flagrantly in contradiction to the experience of the past, or more ignominiously to be refuted by each succeeding act of history, than the deliberate consecration of the idol of an Ottoman Empire as the crowning act of European wisdom in 1856."

<sup>61</sup>In 1877 Redcliffe wrote of the Firmans of 1839 and of 1856 as "real charter of franchises, the Magna Carta. . . ." *Vid. Nineteenth Century*, I, (1877), 736. "It is not surprising that he entertained such optimism," wrote Geffcken (*op. cit.*, 992), "for he always cherished the strange illusion that different creeds of the Ottoman Empire could be blended into one nation by decrees." A part of this "Magna Carta", known as the decree of Gulhane (meaning "house of roses"), as Temperley wittily remarks, faded away as quickly as the house of roses.

scrupulously kept their pledge. During the twenty-odd years that elapsed between the Treaties of Paris and Berlin only once did the Powers interfere in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire—in 1860 when the Lebanese situation had become grave. But this was not, strictly speaking, an unjustified interference as it was not a break in their concerted pledge, although some writers,<sup>62</sup> ignoring the close connection between the promised reforms and the guarantees pledged by the Powers in return, naïvely state that it was not at all justified.

Thus, while the Powers could sympathize with the struggles of the Hungarians, the Lombards, and the Poles against the Russian or Austrian oppression, they regarded the struggles of helpless nations to escape from the far worse tyranny of the Turk with indifference if not with suspicion. Following the Treaty of Paris, for some twenty years the same Powers remonstrated and reproved,<sup>63</sup> advised and exhorted, enjoined and entreated the Turks to redeem their promises of reforms, but without avail. As at the Congress of Berlin, so at the Conference of Paris, England led the Powers to assume such an attitude. She on her part and for the sake of her supposed interests voluntarily doomed the struggling nations to abide in their bondage. For some twenty years their attempt to overthrow the overburdened yoke was frustrated and hence their eventual liberation (the liberation of Christian nations in European Turkey) was delayed by that many years. But the years that separated the Treaty of Paris from that of Berlin are not at all uneventful in the history of the Near East. The constant struggle of these subject nationalities of the Porte against it assumed another and graver aspect, which occasioned the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, and which finally gave to the overworked diplomats the Treaty of Berlin<sup>64</sup>—a treaty one of the 64 articles of which gave an international political standing to the Armenian Question. In that article (Art. 61) the politically uneducated Armenian people hoped to find their eventual salvation, and the Armenians cherished that hope with a zeal that was surpassed only by their simple but sincere belief in the book of the Scriptures.

<sup>62</sup>Sousa, *op. cit.*, 93 and note. Perhaps few writers have so sadly misunderstood the subject as this student of the capitulatory regime.

<sup>63</sup>In 1827 Prince Lieven wrote (*Cambridge Modern History*, X, 194) that "the Porte was perfectly able to distinguish between a mere 'demonstration' and a serious business." This was a statement the truth of which was brought home to all the Powers only after a long and otherwise rich experience.

<sup>64</sup>What J. M. Keynes wrote of the Treaty of Versailles in the heat of the moment, may well be said of the Treaty of Berlin fifty-nine years later. It was a Treaty "without nobility, without morality, without intellect."



## CHAPTER II

### THE LAND, THE PEOPLE, AND THE GOVERNMENT

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The Blue Books recently presented to Parliament show that no part of the Turkish Empire was more abominably governed than Armenia—it was simply a chaos and a scandal.—DUKE OF ARGYLL, 1878.

Oppression renders the poor peasants of the interior [of Asia Minor] false as well as indolent. . . . They are degraded by long ages of oppression. Generous and manly feeling has been long since crushed by the iron hand of tyranny.—HORATIO SOUTHGATE, 1839.

In the introductory chapter an attempt was made to portray the conditions of Asiatic Turkey, and especially the conditions in the Armenian tableland under which the Armenians lived. That description, though brief as it necessarily had to be, fitted in fairly well up to the seventies of the last century. The details of many significant events had to be excluded from such a panoramic survey, and it was deemed proper to evolve another chapter out of such details. In this treatment the order of procedure adopted concerns the following topics: first the land in its various divisions among the neighboring and rival countries; then the inhabitants of the land; then the administrative machinery (limited to the provinces within the Ottoman Empire); and then a résumé of the efforts made by the Armenians through their duly organized and established National Assembly at Constantinople to render that administrative machinery somewhat humane.

The intervening years between the Treaties of Paris and Berlin (1856-1878) were the *Bildungsjahre*, the formative years of new and portentous events within the Ottoman Empire. These were the *Bildungsjahre* of a new spirit among certain subject peoples of that Empire. The spirit of nationalism, "born in inequity and conceived in sin,"<sup>1</sup> was taking root among these peoples and had already its outward manifestations in the Lebanese affairs of 1860-61, in the Cretan troubles of 1866-67, and to a far more accentuated and violent degree, in the Montenegrin, Bosnian, and Herzegovinian affairs of 1875-78.<sup>2</sup> These years may also be called the *Bildungsjahre* of the Armenian Question, since it was in the early

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<sup>1</sup>Veblen, T., *Absentee Ownership*, 38.

<sup>2</sup>A number of writers, even some authorities, equipped with first-hand information, such as the then British Ambassadors Elliot and Layard, attribute the uprisings in the last instances entirely to the activities of Russian agents. In taking such a limited and somewhat partial view, these writers fail to observe the elusive yet ever-present factors which caused constant unrest among these subject peoples. Of course it is as incorrect to deny the disturbing activities of Russian agitators in these provinces as it would be wholly illogical to attribute all such disturbances to these agitators. *Vid.* Elliot, Sir H., *Some Revolutions and other Experiences*, 219-95. For a saner point of view cf. Seton-Watson, R. W., *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 16-21, and Harris, D., *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878*, 63-121.

'seventies that the Armenians came to attach some importance to the Near Eastern diplomacy of the Powers.

Prior to the appearance of the Northern Colossus upon the mountain fastnesses of the Caucasus, that is, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Armenian tableland was divided between Persia and Turkey. In this division Turkey always held—as she still holds—by far the larger of the two parts, though her Armenian population was only slightly more than the Armenian population of Persia. As soon, however, as Russia began to extend her Empire towards the south and southwest she began gradually to take over nearly all of the Caucasus. Thus she acquired some Armenian territory at the expense of the two Mohammedan countries; for, by the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29 and by the Russo-Persian War of 1826-27 she took over a portion of Turkish Armenia and a large portion of Persian Armenia. In this latter instance the acquisition was sufficient to reduce Persian holdings to relative insignificance. After such a partition and repartition the country finally remained divided among these three rivals on very much the same bases as in the Treaty of Berlin, by the provisions of which 22,600 square miles of territory went to Russia and 35,600 square miles remained within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>3</sup>

No definite statistical data exist which may enable us to ascertain the distribution of the Armenian people in these three countries at the end of these wars. There is, however, some quite authoritative information which may be used in the absence of anything better. For the middle of the century there are available several sets of statistics from which may be taken those of Dulaurier<sup>4</sup> and Ubicini.<sup>5</sup> In both instances we have the total number of Armenians in each of the three countries and *not* the number of Armenians inhabiting the Armenian tableland. The former writer gives the number of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as 2,500,000, in the Russian Empire 1,200,000, and in Persia 150,000. Ubicini's figures for these same countries are 2,400,000, 900,000 and 600,000 respectively.<sup>6</sup>

For the 'seventies more varied and comprehensive data are available. First among these are the reports of foreign consuls; then there are Turkish official figures, besides the figures given out by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople. None of these, it is well to observe, is exact. They all are results of more or less close estimates based on some studies and observations on the spot. Between the figures of any given

<sup>3</sup>Lynch, H. F. B., *Armenia*, I, 445-51, and II, 407. Post-war changes in 1921 made slight revision of boundaries between Russia and Turkey by which the latter acquired some 8,000 square miles additional Armenian territory.

<sup>4</sup>*Revue des Deux Mondes*, Ser. I, vol. 44 (April, 1854), 255.

<sup>5</sup>*Op. cit.*, I, 19, and II, 293-5.

<sup>6</sup>The wide margin of difference in the case of Armenians in Persia as brought out by these writers cannot be easily explained, though it may be that Ubicini did not take into account the Armenians who left Persia after the Russo-Persian War while Dulaurier over-estimated that number.

period there is such a wide disparity that it is quite difficult, if not impossible to account for it. Thus the figure for 1878 given by the Armenian Patriarchate is 3,000,000, which figure Goschen found "as exaggerated as those of the Porte."<sup>7</sup> It was asserted by the Patriarchate that of this number some 1,300,000 lived in the six Armenian provinces of Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Erzerum, Sivas, and Mamuret-ul-Aziz.<sup>8</sup> The Turkish official figures, as summarized by Mordtmann,<sup>9</sup> show only 346,679 Armenians against 1,005,426 Mohammedans in the five provinces (not counting Bitlis). In 1880 Major Trotter, the Consul-General for Kurdistan, reported that in his territory (Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, and Erzerum) the Armenians constituted about two-sevenths of the inhabitants, or numbered 700,000.<sup>10</sup>

Of the heterogeneous groups inhabiting these provinces probably the number of the Armenians fluctuated more than the number of others. And this was primarily due to the periodic migration of Armenians to Russia, especially following Russo-Turkish wars.<sup>11</sup> As the Armenian element thus emigrated their number in Armenia decreased. Palgrave wrote in 1876 that one of the consequences of Russo-Turkish wars was the transformation of Armenia into Turkey.<sup>12</sup> This constant exodus made it rather difficult to ascertain their exact number at any given time. That partly accounts for the lack of reliable and correct figures. But that should not detain us at this juncture. For the present purpose it may be sufficient to state that of the total number of 2,400,000 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, probably half, or at least 1,000,000, lived within the six Armenian provinces.<sup>13</sup> If Major Trotter reckoned their number in the five provinces alone at 700,000 in 1880,<sup>14</sup> then an estimate of 1,000,000

<sup>7</sup>Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers, Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 16. Hereafter all references to these *Papers* will be cited as *Turkey* No., etc.

<sup>8</sup>Saroukhan, A., *The Armenian Question and the Armenian National Constitution in Turkey* (in Armenian), 431. These provinces changed their boundaries as well as their names several times after their incorporation into the Empire. Thus down to the reign of Mahmoud II (1808-1839) the lands and districts bore the names of peoples by whom they were originally and principally inhabited. In European Turkey there were Bosna, Bulgaristan (the land of the Bulgars), Roumanistan (the land of the Roumanians) etc.; in Asiatic Turkey there were Ermenistan (the land of the Armenians), Kurdistan (the land of the Kurds), etc. After Mahmoud II's reign these names were suppressed and the lands were divided into provinces. *Vid.* the Annex of the seventh Protocol of the Constantinople Conference and the remarks of the Austrian Ambassador Count Zichy, *Turkey* No. 2 (1877), 2.

<sup>9</sup>"Officielle Bevölkerungs Ziffern aus der Asiatischen Türkei," *Zeitsch. Gesell. Erdkunde zu Berlin*, XV (1880), 132-7.

<sup>10</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 248.

<sup>11</sup>After the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), as after that of Turkmenchai (1828) over 100,000 Armenians moved from Turkish and Persian Armenia to Russian Armenia. *Vid.* Papazian, V., *The History of Armenian Literature* (in Armenian), II, 62-3. According to De la Jonquière (*Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, II, 122, nov. ed.), some 50,000 Armenian families left Turkish Armenia for Russian Armenia. *Vid.* also Neumann, C. F., *Geschichte der Uebersiedlung von vierzig tausend Armeniens, welche in Jahre 1828 aus der persischen Provinz Aderbaidschan nach Russland auswanderten*; Brant, J., "Journey through a part of Armenia and Asia Minor," *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, VI (1836), 187-222, and *idem.*, "Notes of a Journey through a part of Kurdistan," *ibid.*, X (1841), 341-432.

<sup>12</sup>"Les invasions russes ont eu pour resultant principal de transformer l'Arménie en Turkestan." Quoted in Réclus, E., *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, VI, 338.

<sup>13</sup>Ubicini and Pavet de Courteille, *op. cit.*, 69-70. In his *Letters* (II, 205-6) Ubicini states that majority of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire inhabit these provinces.

<sup>14</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 248 and note.

for the six provinces before the War of 1877-78 cannot be an over-estimate.

For administrative and for general governmental purposes, each province, or vilayet<sup>15</sup> (in Turkish), was divided into sanjaks, or departments; each sanjak into cazas, or districts; and each caza into nahiehs, or communes. The vilayet was headed by a vali, or governor-general; the sanjak by a mutesarif, or governor; the caza by a kaimakam, or sub-prefect; and the nahieh by a mudir, or mayor. In this discussion our main concern is with the fate of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as a whole, but our particular aim is to deal with the condition of the Armenians in these six provinces. Whatever may be said concerning the misgovernment of the various parts of the Empire wherein the Armenians dwelt, will particularly apply to those in the six provinces.

In the introductory chapter a number of disabilities were mentioned under which the Armenians were placed; some instances of discrimination against the Armenians were given, such as the unequal system of taxation, their ineligibility for the military and public services, the prohibitions (applied to them only) to bear arms while the Mohammedans enjoyed such privileges, and the non-acceptance of their testimony in the courts.<sup>16</sup> Here we shall have occasion to go into the details, as set forth in the reports or *cahiers* of local Armenian primates.

The conditions that made life unbearable for the Christians,<sup>17</sup> and especially for the Armenians, in a country where law meant no more to its inhabitants than to irresponsible government officials, and where the enforcement of any law to eliminate discriminations and injustices would have been difficult without the full cooperation of the central and local authorities, any one of these discriminations and disabilities would have been sufficient to cause endless conflicts between the favored and the oppressed classes of the population. Among the variety of disabilities and discriminations perhaps the system of taxation and the iniquitous manner in which the taxes were levied were the most flagrant. There tax-farming was the classic system of collecting taxes, and this abominable practice prevailed down to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Had there not been other elements in this particular abuse, the Armenians would not have complained of it so bitterly and loudly, since the system was applicable to all the inhabitants alike. But there were innumerable other matters connected with the subject of taxation that made the situation distinctly discriminatory against the Armenians. For one thing, they had

<sup>15</sup>Up to 1864 the word *eyalet* was used instead of *vilayet*, but by the Law of the Vilayets of that year the latter form was adopted. *Vid.*, Engelhardt, *op. cit.*, I, 193.

<sup>16</sup>*Cf. ante*, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup>In a way it is regrettable that the term Christian and Armenian has to be used interchangeably; but there the terms were not only synonymous but almost identical in their meaning. With the exception of an inconsiderable number of Assyrians and Nestorians all the Christians were Armenians. *Vid.*, Lynch, *op. cit.*, II, 415-8, and Trotter in *Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 248-61.

to pay a greater variety of taxes. The Kharadj,<sup>18</sup> or the head-tax, the military exemption tax, the Kishlak, or the winter-quartering tax, the hospitality tax, and many others were imposed and exacted from the Armenians alone. "The rayahs," wrote Moltke on June 15 of 1838,<sup>19</sup> "are taxed here throughout more than the Moslems." According to this observer, "the true ground for complaint lies above all not in that the taxes are high, but that they are arbitrary. So long as the tax-farming system exists an equitable assessment and determination of taxes is impossible." Such is the opinion of perhaps the keenest observer of affairs in the Empire.

That was nearly half a century prior to the placing of the Armenian Question in an international treaty. For the 'eighties and 'nineties we have the account of another German, whose statements on this score are no less disheartening concerning the suffering of the Armenians under this heavy burden. Herr La Barbe wittily yet correctly remarks that taxes, according to political economy, are classified as direct and indirect, while in Turkey, and especially in the Armenian provinces of Turkey, this canon of political economy does not apply. Instead, there we have the legal and illegal taxes.<sup>20</sup> And the "Poor Armenian" was obliged to pay both of them as often as he could.<sup>21</sup>

Along with this tax burden, much of which was unnecessarily imposed principally by the authorities, a species of taxes, unauthorized and cruel, unlicensed and abominable, was levied by irregulars, the Kurds, Circassians, and other nomadic tribes who lived side by side with the Armenians in the Armenian tableland. There, placed between the hammer and the anvil, so to speak, the Armenian could neither free himself from the extortions of the duly authorized tax-farmer nor from the pillages and plunders of his nomadic neighbor. And nothing was spared in the course of these depredations; life, property, and above all the honor of the family<sup>22</sup> were always in jeopardy. As if these were not sufficient to make life unendurable, the authorities winked at these outrages, and conse-

<sup>18</sup>On Kharadj and military exemption tax *vid. ante*, pp. 15-16; on Kishlak and hospitality tax *vid. seq.*, p. 34.

<sup>19</sup>*Op. cit.*, 294-6. "Die Rayahs steuern hier überall mehr als die Moslems; der Charadach, . . . ist indes bekanntlich nur sehr gering, . . . Der wahre Grund zur Klage liegt überhaupt nicht darin dass die Steuern hoch, sondern dass sie willkürlich sind. Solange die Steuererhebung in nichts Anderem besteht als darin, . . . solange kann der Ackerbau sich nie heben, . . . viel weniger Gewerthtaetigkeit Wurzel fassen. . . . Eine gerechte Vertheilung und Feststellung der Steuern ist aber unmoeglich, solange der jetzige Erhebungsmodus fortdauert."

<sup>20</sup>"Die Steuern im türkischen Armenien und die Ursachen der armenischen Bewegung," *Neue Zeit*, XVI (1897), 37-46.

<sup>21</sup>"Armes Volk!" wrote La Barbe (*loc. cit.*, 46), "zahle für das Erbauen deines Hauses; zahle für dein Haupt; zahle, weil du geboren bist, weil du lebst, weil du Luft einatmest; zahle für deine Familie; für die Erzeugnisse deines Schweisses;—zahle dem Staate, zahle den Wucherern, zahle den Kurden, zahle deiner eignen Kirche, . . . jawohl die Kirche verlangt auch ihren Zehnten. . . . zahle, zahle ohne Ende. Wäre es das Meer, es wäre schön trocken, wäre es ein Strom, es hörte aus zu fließen."

<sup>22</sup>The reader, unfamiliar with the life and customs so long prevalent among the Armenians, perhaps will never understand what the honor of the family meant to the Armenians. From the days immemorial and unrecorded in historic acts the family unit and its sanctity has always been maintained and preserved against all odds. The severance of ties from this unit has always been regarded almost as sacrilegious. In the light of this reminder one may see what the kidnapping and raping of an Armenian woman by a Kurd or a Turk meant to an Armenian family.

quently there was no redress. To the injury was thus added the worse pain of moral stigma which was the hardest to endure.<sup>23</sup>

No less obnoxious and far more abominable was the Kishlak, or the Kurds' seemingly prescriptive right to free winter quarters in Armenian homes. Consul Brant in 1838 thought that it was "the heaviest imposition of the whole."<sup>24</sup> The Kurds for the most part lived in the mountains and under tents when the weather permitted, but in the winter they used to fall upon Armenian villages, demanding free quarters for themselves and for their flocks of sheep. Sometimes the winter season lasted six months, and for six months they had to be quartered. For this "right" the Kurdish chiefs paid a sum of money to the governor-general. No wonder that the latter did not interfere when the Kurds molested and mistreated and even murdered the Armenians. And the villagers were forced to give such free quarters.<sup>25</sup> Such was the practice at least throughout the nineteenth century, and if the Armenians at times resisted, the Kurds could fall upon them as helpless and defenseless prey.<sup>26</sup> The same was true of the hospitality tax, which meant that the Christian was bound to offer free lodging and food for three days a year to all government officials or to all those who passed as such.<sup>27</sup>

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that there was a continuous exodus of the Armenians from their homeland to other parts of the Empire, where such raids and robberies were less frequent. A goodly number migrated to various parts of western Asia Minor. Brant estimated that an "immense number of Armenians" from the pashalik of Van annually "migrate to Constantinople, where they employ themselves as laborers, porters, artisans, and sometimes sarafs."<sup>27a</sup> He was then informed that 31,000 Armenians were thus absented from the pashalik. Three years earlier he found that the same was true in the case of Kharput pashalik (the vilayet of Mamuret-ul-Aziz). "They migrated to the Capital or some large city to procure work, leaving their families (as hostages for their return) in penury."<sup>28</sup> They had to leave their families behind because migration in families was not permitted; the government imposed this prohibition (applied to Christians alone) in order "to prevent diminution of contributors to local taxation."<sup>29</sup> At about the same time another traveller (Vice-Consul H. Suter) observed that in the district of

<sup>23</sup>"Instead of brutal but innocent injustice of nature," wrote Santayana (*The Life of Reason*, II, 107-108), "what they [men] suffer from is the sly injustice of men; and though the suffering is less—for the worst of men is human—the injury is more sensible. . . . But the suffering has an added sting when it enables others to be exempt from it. . . ."

<sup>24</sup>"Notes," *loc. cit.*, 348.

<sup>25</sup>Brant, "Notes," *loc. cit.*, 348-9 and *passim*.

<sup>26</sup>Lynch, *op. cit.*, II, 423; Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *op. cit.*, 96.

<sup>27</sup>Heidborn, A., *Manuel de Droit Public et Administratif de l'Empire Ottoman*, II, 5 and note 12.

<sup>27a</sup>Brant, "Notes," *loc. cit.*, 395.

<sup>28</sup>Brant, "Journey," *loc. cit.*, 207.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.* Cf. also MacFarlane, C., *Turkey and Its Destiny*, I, 160.

Shabin Carahissar (in the province of Erzerum) "After the harvest is over, in September, many of the young men proceed to Constantinople, where they employ themselves as porters or artisans till about the month of February, when they return to the cultivation of their fields."<sup>80</sup> Much is known of these roaming, homeless people in the slums of the Capital. Just as the "sleepless herdsman in the Odyssey could earn wages by working day and night," so these unfortunate souls could endure all kinds of misery and hardship in the inhospitable city, and thus compound their hard-gained seasonal earnings only to gratify hordes of plunderers in their nativity. In the 'seventies the number of such persons in the Capital alone was estimated 30,000-50,000.<sup>81</sup>

The Armenian National Assembly at Constantinople<sup>82</sup> was compelled to concern itself not only with the lot of these unfortunates in Constantinople, but also with the fate of those in the homeland. From 1869 on (upon the election of the new Patriarch Khrimian) the Assembly paid less and less attention to the communal affairs at the Capital and turned its attention more and more to the provinces. As the Kurdish, Turkish, and Circassian oppressions had no end, so the complaints and petitions, the clamor for aids, and requests for redress from wrongs were endless, especially during these years. All these were addressed to the Patriarch, since he was the "Speaker," the official spokesman of the Armenian people at the Porte. The Patriarch did his part as best he could to solace the grief of his sorely tired flock without being able to reduce its suffering by a single jot. The Porte failed to do its office, and the misery was prolonged and intensified; the oppressions and outrages continued until the dark days of the World War, when the Armenian tableland was to be cleared of every descendant of the race.<sup>83</sup>

Up to 1870 the complaints and petitions were sent from the provinces directly to the Patriarch, and the latter in his turn apprised the Porte of their contents. With the beginning of 1870 matters took a new turn. The then Patriarch was a former primate of Van, the principal city in one of the Armenian provinces of the same name. He had seen all the vicissitudes to which the people were subjected. His primary task, then, as Patriarch, was to better the lot of his unfortunate compatriots in these provinces. He was determined to attain this end either by fair or foul

<sup>80</sup>"Notes of a Journey from Erzurum to Trebizond," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, X (1841), 437.

<sup>81</sup>Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *op. cit.*, 103; Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 431 and note. Ubicini states (*Letters*, I, 24) that in the 'forties there were at least 75,000 bekiares (single men, bachelor emigrés) in Constantinople, majority of which number were probably Armenians.

<sup>82</sup>This National Assembly came into being in 1860 and was constituted as a duly sanctioned deliberative body by the Sultan in 1863. It was dissolved in October of 1934 by the Turkish government.

<sup>83</sup>A few thousand Armenians were still to be found in these provinces after the War. In the winter of 1920-30, however, these were suspected of fomenting insurrection along with the Kurds and were subsequently evicted, in a truly "bag and baggage" manner, out of their homes in January of 1930. *Vid. The News Bulletin of the Foreign Policy Association*, IX (Feb. 14, 1930).

means, for that end had become a religion with him. At the time of his election to the Patriarchate he had openly declared: "Do not regard me as the Patriarch of Constantinople; I am the embodiment of the woes and wounds of Armenia; I do not know how my predecessors have presented the sufferings of the Armenians to the Porte, but I shall aim at effective means."<sup>84</sup> He meant to be true to his dictum, but unfortunately he had to leave the Patriarchate before he could accomplish much. In 1872 when he realized that it was not easy to obtain the execution of the reforms promised by the Porte; nor any easier to work with a motley, conservatively disposed, and in some degree an "addled" Assembly, then he tendered his resignation with an aching heart and went back to his native land to live there and defend his people against the Kurds. His Patriarchal term was one full of valiant efforts with no commensurate results. Throughout his long life (1820-1908) this Armenian Pio Nono proved to be a noble soul, a man born to lead forlorn hopes and die for lost causes.

Prior to his election the Assembly had already constituted a Committee on Provincial Affairs which was to attend to the provincial matters, and especially to ameliorate the relations of the Armenian communities with the Turkish authorities. At first this Committee did very little, since all the petitions and complaints sent in from the provincial primates were addressed directly to the Patriarchate and it was assumed that the Patriarch would attend to nearly all of these in his due capacity as spokesman. With the beginning of the 'seventies, however, the number of these petitions and complaints coming from the various parts of the provinces multiplied, and a veritable flood of *cahiers*, not at all dissimilar to the original *cahiers* (of the French Revolution), found their way into the Patriarchal archives. On Oct. 23/Nov. 5, 1870, it was decided that the Patriarch and his staff could not deal adequately with these and so the Assembly took the matter upon itself. It was then voted that the Committee should henceforth gather and examine the petitions and complaints, and render reports to the Assembly.<sup>85</sup> More pressing and urgent means had to be employed in bringing the Porte not only to listen to the petitions but also to exert its authority over the provincial officials. Heretofore, as the Patriarch stated, "the complaints of the provincial Armenian population were couched in the petitions [*takrir* is the word used in Turkish] and presented to the Porte. The Porte then notified the valis of the several provinces of the nature of these petitions and perhaps enjoined these

<sup>84</sup>The *Records of the National Assembly* (in Armenian), Oct. 23/Nov. 5, 1870, 128. This work, which will be cited hereafter as *Records*, is a complete account of the proceedings of the principal Armenian deliberative body from 1860 to 1914. In some 30 quarto volumes these constitute a true mine of information on Armenian affairs in Turkey. Citations will be given by date and page references, since the numbering of the volumes is not uniform and clear. The dates are given in the Julian calendar, but herein corrections are made on the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>85</sup>*Records*, Oct. 23/Nov. 5, 1870, 132.



officials to restrain the oppressions."<sup>36</sup> The question was whether the orders emanating from the Capital were being obeyed or not. What was to be done by the Patriarchate in order to obtain tangible results? In this sense the Patriarch addressed the Assembly and enjoined that body to find ways by which the situation might be improved.

In face of such an urgent appeal the Assembly could not delay the matter. In the sitting of Nov. 21/Dec. 3, 1870, it was agreed that the appeals and petitions addressed to the Porte by the Patriarch were futile, and that a petition prepared by the Committee of the Assembly and rendered to the Porte in the name of the Assembly would naturally be more representative and hence would promise some success.<sup>37</sup> As it then was stated by the Patriarch, the gist of all complaints and petitions brought out the fact that the government might do one of two things: either disarm the Kurds, or give the Armenians the permission to arm; otherwise it would be impossible to safeguard the lives of the Armenians in the provinces. Then another Committee—a Special Committee, in addition to the old standing Committee on Provincial Affairs—was appointed to study the petitions and complaints and render its report to the Assembly, with a set of remedial suggestions the adoption of which might ameliorate the situation. This Special Committee of ten members was headed by Archbishop Nerses, who later served as Patriarch for ten years (1874-1884).

The Committee proceeded to its task, it would seem, in a more or less leisurely manner. This, however, can be explained partly by the fact that the amassing and classifying, studying and digesting the contents of several thousand petitions was not a simple task. The Committee delved into all the petitions lodged at the Patriarchate during the preceding twenty years. Having done this, the Committee then came to the conclusion that these petitions "prove all the heretofore heard of related corruptions, oppressions, etc."<sup>38</sup> Of course this was a foregone conclusion, since all of the petitions could not have been prepared for the occasion, and since nearly all of them enumerated the same kind of wrongs under which the people were suffering. After such a careful study it was found that there were four general causes of complaint: the non-acceptance of non-Mohammedan testimony in the courts; the abuses connected with the matter of taxation; oppressions and outrages committed by government officials, such as forced conversions, rapes, assaults, etc.; and oppressions and outrages committed by civilians and brigands.<sup>39</sup>

These petitions had come from various parts of the Empire, mostly of course from the eastern provinces, though in western Asia Minor such

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 21/Dec. 3, 1870, 158.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 8/21, 1871, 475.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 876-8.

places as Adana, Aidin, and Broussa were not at all under-represented. Even Aleppo sent some forty-four petitions. One petition from this vilayet read that when the primate had asked the vali for redress of wrongs suffered by some members of his community, the official snubbed the primate, reminding him that he was not a foreign consul.<sup>40</sup> In 1867 a group of Kurds carried away a flock of over 1,000 sheep from the Armenian village Bulanik (in the vilayet of Erzerum). The vali was asked to compel the Kurds to return the sheep to their rightful Armenian owners. Finally the matter was referred to Constantinople, but the Grand Vizir was not disposed to satisfy the claims of the Armenians. "If the Armenians do not like things as they are in these provinces," wrote this chief official of the Porte, "they may leave the country; then we can populate these places with Circassians."<sup>41</sup> Once the Patriarch went directly to the Grand Vizir Ali Pasha and entreated this "morning star of the Young Turk movement" to find ways to better the condition of the Armenians in the provinces. "I am to write to the proper authorities immediately concerning the Armenians" replied the Grand Vizir. "But your written orders," retorted the Patriarch wittily yet with philosophical exactness, "do not get beyond Scutari."<sup>42</sup> (Scutari is a suburb of Constantinople on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus.) Such was the nature of the petitions and such the attention they received from the officials of the Porte, from the Sultan and the Grand Vizir down to the last dragoman or the mudir.

The Committee along with its Report also submitted its recommendations and suggestions, through the adoption of which it was thought that some of the abuses and outrages might be eliminated.<sup>43</sup> This part, entitled "Remedies for the Condition of the Provincial Nationals," stated that earlier petitions sent to the Porte and the resultant orders issued by the Porte to the local officials had proved to be entirely ineffective and had brought about no amelioration of the situation. Hence the Committee advised the Assembly and the Patriarch to resort to "another means through which its complaints may be heard and that the Porte also must make use of some other means than the mere issuance of orders."<sup>44</sup>

The first of these suggestions concerned the matter of taxation. Therein it was stated that instead of the military exemption tax, the Armenians be permitted to enrol in the army, and that other taxes instead of being collected by means of tax-farming be collected directly by the officials of the government. The next suggestion dealt with the venal

<sup>40</sup>Records, Nov. 21/Dec. 3, 1870, 162.

<sup>41</sup>Quoted in Shahrman, V., *The Origin of the Armenian Question*, (in Armenian), 35.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 39-40.

<sup>43</sup>This Report is known as the "First Report on the Oppressions in the Provinces," in order to distinguish it from the "Second Report," dealing with the same subject that was prepared a few years later. *Vid. Records*, Oct. 8/21, 1871, 468-83.

<sup>44</sup>Records, Oct. 8/21, 1871, 479.

corruption of the government officials. Strict control over local officials was urgently recommended and the cooperation of these officials with local Armenian primates was deemed as a *sine qua non* for the amelioration of the lot of the Armenians. As to the legal injustices under which the people suffered, it was urged that criminal and commercial cases be referred to and tried in the civil courts (Mehkemeh-i-Nizamieh) and not in Mohammedan religious courts (Mehkemeh-i-Sheri). Of course it was also recommended that non-Mohammedan testimony be accepted in the courts. And lastly, concerning the outrages and brigandage committed by the civilian Kurds and Circassians, it was suggested that the government should permit the Armenians to bear arms if it were unwilling to disarm the Kurds and the other armed peoples. Curiously enough it was also suggested that marauding brigands be exiled to Roumeli—the southeastern parts of the Ottoman possessions in the Balkan Peninsula.<sup>45</sup>

Out of this rather long Report some parts were selected to make up the petition that was subsequently presented to the Porte. This was prepared in due form early in 1872 and presented to the Porte in April.<sup>46</sup> At the time the Grand Vizir promised to consider this petition, the "Memorandum" as it was called. He assured the Patriarch with great earnestness and solemnity that everything would be done in order to bring about the desired changes in the condition of the Armenian provinces. That was, however, the end of the matter and nothing more was heard of it for several years, except that four years later when the National Assembly was submitting another petition through its President the Patriarch to the Porte, he was warned not to "get mixed up in matters other than religious."<sup>47</sup>

But the failure of this first petition to produce any results did not prevent the Armenians from addressing another such petition. That, they must have thought, was the only path open to them to seek a way out of the terrible *impasse*. They acted as though they knew only the half-truth of the maxim:—"It is not always expedient for the people to do that which they may lawfully do. It often happens that a remedy which is applied is worse than the disease. So it becomes prudent for men to try all means before taking up the sword."<sup>48</sup> And the Armenians, thinking neither of taking the only and the inevitable last step, nor of profiting by the maxim that "it is a law of nature that creatures which cannot live by strength are obliged to live by cunning,"<sup>49</sup> always assumed the role of the suppliant, and their petitions were nothing more than supplications. By

<sup>45</sup>These Circassians, originally natives of the Caucasus, had come to these provinces after they had lived in the Balkan peninsula for a number of years.

<sup>46</sup>*Records*, April 11/24, 1872.

<sup>47</sup>Ormanian, M., *The Story of the Nation* (in Armenian), III, 4286-7, taken from the Armenian daily *Massis* of Constantinople. (1872, #1285)

<sup>48</sup>*Vindictae Contra Tyrannos*, quoted in Coker, F. W., *Readings in Political Philosophy*, 218.

<sup>49</sup>Argyll, *Our Responsibilities for Turkey*, 53.

some spiritual and mental convulsion on the part of the Sultan they expected good out of sources from which only evil could come. They hoped that somehow, sometime, something might be done which would in some way improve their unenviable lot. Of course all such expectations were based upon pious wishes and unrealized hopes.

The first long petition rendered to the Porte was followed by a veritable stream of petitions from the provincial primates to the Patriarchate; many of these were forwarded to the Porte, only to be ignored. The nature of these petitions is so illustrative of the conditions and grievances that no apology need be offered in reciting the chief facts contained in a few of these petitions.

In the district of Sassoun the Kurds claimed to be tax-farmers and proceeded to collect taxes from the Armenians, but these of course were not turned over to the government officials. Then the government, with the intent of punishing the Kurds, made war upon them, but the government forces were defeated. Then the Kurds fell upon the Armenians who, on April 15/27, 1872, petitioned the Porte for protection, but no reply was forthcoming to their requests.<sup>50</sup> In Severeke (vilayet of Diarbekir) the people complained that local officials continued to exact military exemption taxes for persons who had been dead for years. On Aug. 8/20, 1872, the Porte was apprised of this mischief, but nothing was done.<sup>51</sup> In the village of Roumeli (vilayet of Erzerum) the fourteen year old Martha Sarkissian was kidnapped and raped on May 13/25, 1872, by a certain Ali Sefer. The girl's parents appealed to the government officials, but the Turks claimed that the girl had become Moslem and therefore the parents had no claim over her. Finally the case was brought to the Patriarchate and then petitioned to the Porte on July 27/Aug. 8, 1873. Two additional pressing petitions were addressed to the Porte on Aug. 24/Sept. 7 and Nov. 8/20, 1873. But neither the first petition, nor the second, nor even a third one could induce the government to act and aid in the return of the girl to her parents.<sup>52</sup> On the plains of Mush (vilayet of Van) Armenian villages were raided and plundered by Kurds, and the Patriarchate petitioned the Porte on Sept. 21/Oct. 2, 1873, on behalf of his unfortunate co-religionists; but the Porte ignored the petition.<sup>53</sup> A band of Kurds from Sassoun fell upon the monastery of Aghpurig (in Mush); they claimed the right of winter quartering and, besides, asked for the payment of 400 piasters (about \$3.00) in cash, four cows, and 20 sheep. The inmates of the monastery were awe-stricken and forced to comply with the categorical demands of these usurpers. They presented the matter by petition to the authorities and finally, on April

<sup>50</sup>*Records*, Sept. 17/29, 1876, 204.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 17/29, 1876, 207.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 207-208.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 215.

25/May 7, 1874, to the Porte. Yet nothing had been done up to September, 1876.<sup>54</sup>

These are only a random selection from some hundred odd cases minutely set forth in this Second Report covering some 38 quarto pages.<sup>55</sup> Therein too, are listed some 200 instances in which the rightful Armenian owners of large tracts of arable land are deprived of their possessions; Kurds and Turks have laid claims to these lands, and of course the courts would decide in favor of the Mohammedan claimants.

Then, too, this Second Report, like its ill-fated predecessor, included suggestions and recommendations similar to those mentioned in the First Report. "The Armenians," read the Report, "are entitled and must be entitled to the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Mohammedans." This equality was claimed "because the Armenians through their undivided loyalty to the Porte for centuries have given proof of having earned these rights and privileges."<sup>56</sup> It must have been easy for the framers of this Report to dwell upon unrealized historic claims and ignore the actualities of contemporary life. Naïveté has its limits, but Oriental naïveté, like Oriental suppleness and Oriental mysticism, is beyond the ken and comprehension of ordinary mortals. "Finally," ran the concluding paragraph of this Report, "the Armenians seek their future in the future of this country, and their claims, if satisfied according to his August Majesty's good judgments, would be for the benefit of the country."<sup>57</sup> Such are the sorry details of this Report, a graphic yet only a partial description of the conditions under which the Armenians groaned in their homeland, while their conqueror-masters, usurpers of the worst type, were unwilling to provide remedies; nay, were doing all in their power to perpetuate these abominable conditions.

In September, 1876, this Report came before the Assembly, which decided to present it, with a petition, to the Porte. But at this time, as is well known, new events were making history in other parts of the Ottoman Empire—events that were to affect the future of the Armenians and give a new turn to the Armenian Question. These events—the insurrections and wars in the Balkans—were so portentous and so absorbing that not only were the subject peoples of the Empire intensely interested in them and affected by them, but European diplomacy also was given the chance to try its hand. Not that the diplomats were anxious to be once more embroiled in "that shifting, intractable, and interwoven tangle of conflicting interests, rival peoples, and antagonistic faiths that is veiled under the easy name of the Eastern Question;"<sup>58</sup> nor were they any more

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 217-9.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 17/29, 1876, 202-239.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>58</sup>Morley, J., quoted in Marriott, J. A. R., *The Eastern Question*, 1.

certain of giving it "the final solution;"<sup>59</sup> but, like many a similar problem that when not properly attended to in due time will constantly bring itself to the fore in more complicated forms, so the Eastern Question, a veritable ulcer upon the body politic of European statecraft, was once more to break out in the mid-'seventies. Despite the earnest attempts of the diplomats, and especially the efforts of the English diplomats, not to raise so grave a question at so critical a juncture, and despite the super-human energy which these men put forth toward maintaining the *status quo*, the Question had to crop up once more because, as we are wont to say, that was the will of the people; that was the result of the working of the spirit of the oppressed and manhandled peoples. And the diplomats once more had to follow the lead of these elusive forces; for, as Guizot had said, "the instinct of nations sees further than the negotiations of diplomats."<sup>60</sup> These events in the Balkans, then, are of such importance in their relation to the beginnings of the Armenian Question that it would seem quite proper to make a brief digression at this point and to take a look at them in their setting, for an understanding of the early phase of the Armenian Question naturally presupposes a knowledge of the Eastern Question.

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<sup>59</sup>Derby had said in 1875: "We have before us . . . a question of which we are not likely to hear for a long while—a question the final solution of which nobody clearly foresees." Quoted in Sanderson, S. T., and Roscoe, E. S., *Speeches and Addresses of the Fourteenth Earl of Derby*, I, x.

<sup>60</sup>"L'instinct des peuples voit plus loin que les negociations des diplomates." *Histoire de France*, IV, 1.

### CHAPTER III

## THE BALKANS, THE POWERS, AND THE ARMENIANS

Nichts Bessers weiss ich mir an Sonn- und Feiertagen,  
Als ein Gespräch von Krieg und Kriegsgeschrei,  
Wenn hinten, weit, in der Türkei,  
Die Völker auf einander schlagen.

—GOETHE, *Faust*, Act I, Sc. ii.

There cannot be much doubt that but for Gladstone, the England of the 'seventies would have accepted the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria as placidly as we have accepted those in Armenia.—RAMSAY MUIR, 1924.

The sufferings and vicissitudes described above were not strictly confined to the Asiatic provinces of the Porte, though it was there that they were carried to the point of monstrosity. The Christian subjects of the Porte in its European possessions were also to share some of these sufferings. But there, when the oppressive yolk of the Porte became unbearable, the people rebelled against the government, whereas in the 'seventies the idea of rebellion and insurrection did not even occur to the Armenians in the eastern provinces. Besides, the chances of obtaining redress for the wrongs which the Christians in the European provinces suffered were infinitely greater. Any local insurrection might easily be spread throughout these discontented peoples, and with the aid of some mediatory power, or by means of an effective intervention by a group of powers, the then highly prized desideratum—local self-government or autonomy—might be had, which in its turn sooner or later might lead to independence. So it was in the summer of 1875 when "the embers of the Eastern Question, which for twenty years had been allowed to smoulder, were stirred by insurrections among the Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by the rapid spread of the flames among kindred peoples of Serbia and Montenegro."<sup>1</sup> And the Turks' notorious inability to quell such uprisings in their inception without brutal massacres, or their unwillingness to satisfy the rebels partially permitted the uprising to become a general one. Soon the Powers realized that the Turk could only make a terrible mess of the situation and they decided to intervene through their consuls. All the principal Powers except England agreed to do so; but the "afflorescent Dizzy," the Prime Minister of the "Faery Queen," thought it proper to

<sup>1</sup>Marriott, J. A. R., *Edinburgh Review*, 247 (Jan., 1928), 125. It is not intended to enter into the details of these affairs any more than necessary to shed some light on the development of the Armenian Question. The interested student is referred to Tyler, M. W., *The European Powers and the Near East, 1875-1908*; Harris, D., *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878*; Seton-Watson, R. W., *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*.

let the Turks settle the matters in their characteristic manner.<sup>2</sup> Only reluctantly and upon the invitation of the Porte did he and his government consent to go with the rest of the Powers into this mediatory task. But by the time the consuls were authorized so to act (in August, 1875) the insurrection had gotten out of control. Then the Powers insistently demanded (again England holding back) that the Porte should at least meet the demands of the rebels half way and that reforms should be introduced in the European provinces. At first the Porte was unwilling to listen to such counsels, and later (in the fall of 1875) when it consented to promise such reforms, the rebels would not accept mere promises. Instead, they insisted that these promises be guaranteed by the Powers, and the Powers (excepting England) were willing to do this; their intentions were embodied in the Andrassy Note<sup>3</sup> of December, 1875. This Note, "which was in fact little more than a request that the promises already given (by the Porte) should be carried out,"<sup>4</sup> urged on the Turks a scheme of reforms along the following lines: equality of Christians and Moslems before the law, an armistice with the insurgents, and a mixed commission to supervise the execution of a program of reforms.<sup>5</sup> The Note was drafted by Austria, Germany and Russia and then sent to England, France, and Italy for their adherence. This seemed like giving orders to these Powers as to what to do in regard to the Eastern Question. This procedure alone was sufficient to arouse diplomatic indignation, especially in England, even if that country had not already been determined not to march along with the Concert of Europe in its dealing with the Eastern Question.<sup>6</sup> Besides, assuming that these three Powers had less interest than Austria and Russia in the Near East, what was Germany's interest there? Had not the future "Honest Broker" stated only a few days before the Constantinople Conference that "the whole Eastern Question is not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier"?<sup>7</sup> What, then, was his object now in posing as a principal arbiter of the Eastern Question?

Finally, however, France and Italy signed on the dotted lines, and

<sup>2</sup>Monypenny, W. F., and Buckle, G. E., *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield*, VI, 11. This work will be cited as Monypenny and Buckle. Cf. also MacColl, M., *The Eastern Question*, 449-50, and Harris, *op. cit.*, 88-98.

<sup>3</sup>The most recent and fully documented writing on this Note is that of Harris, D., "The Origins of the Andrassy Note of December, 1875," *Pacific Historical Review*, I (1932), 193-211. Cf. also his book, *op. cit.*, 132-288; for the text of the Note, *vid. Staatsarchiv*, 30 (1877), 22-30.

<sup>4</sup>Bright, J., *History of England*, IV, 521.

<sup>5</sup>Tyler, *op. cit.*, 60. The salient parts of this Note are to be found in an earlier despatch of Aug. 7, 1875 of Andrassy to Count Zichy at Constantinople, and also in a despatch to Consul Mayer at St. Petersburg. *Vid. Staatsarchiv*, 33 (1878), 292-300.

<sup>6</sup>"I wasted twenty-five years of my life," wrote Bismarck (quoted in Robertson, C. G., *Bismarck*, 173), "by the supposition that England was a great nation." But when he corrected himself he was no better off; his remaining years were as badly wasted in thinking that she was not a great power.

<sup>7</sup>"Ich habe gesagt: ich werde zu irgend welcher activen Beteiligung Deutschlands an diesen Dingen nicht raten, so lange ich in dem ganzen für Deutschland kein Interesse sehe, welches auch nur—entschuldigen Sie die Derbheit des Ausdruck—die gesunden Knochen eines einzigen pommerschen Musketers wert wäre." His speech of Dec. 5, 1876, given in Stein, P., *Bismarcks Reden*, VI, 237. Italics are not in the original.



England, again at the bidding of the Porte and *not*, as has often been asserted,<sup>8</sup> upon Derby's statement that "it is too late to stand on the dignity and the independence of the Sultan,"<sup>9</sup> gave her assent. Of course the Porte accepted the Note and forthwith issued an iradeh (decree) of reforms which, "fortified by Lord Derby's active support, it took care to keep in the safe region of abstract promises."<sup>10</sup> But the Note had lost its efficacy by the inevitable change of circumstances. Events were moving with such rapidity that diplomats neither could follow them nor could readily adjust themselves to the intricacies arising out of the new situation. The insurgents refused to accept the conditions laid down in the Note and demanded a more extensive scheme of reforms as well as guarantees by the Powers that the reforms would be carried out. Thus the Note failed to serve its purpose.

In the spring of 1876 nearly all of the Balkans were roused to excitement. The Turkish populace also became frantic and, during a riot at Salonica in early May, the French and German consuls were murdered. Once more the three chancellors (Andrassy, Bismarck, and Gorchakov) met, this time in Berlin and drafted the Berlin Memorandum. This was only a "stronger edition of Count Andrassy's Note,"<sup>11</sup> though sufficiently stiff to satisfy the Russians.<sup>12</sup> Then it was sent to England, France, and Italy for their adhesion. As in the case of the Andrassy Note, the last two powers immediately signed it, but again the English blew hot and cold over it and finally declined to do so.

The main reason why England failed to adhere to this Memorandum was Disraeli's opposition to it, and also that she was not asked to do so by the Porte. Another reason for her non-adherence was that some men in the Cabinet did not "believe that the Note was calculated to effect the object with which they are informed it has been framed."<sup>13</sup> And the English Ambassador at Constantinople played his part well in this game. "He was in constant communication with the Grand Vizir" and kept the Turkish government informed as to what action his government was con-

<sup>8</sup>Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 18-9; Elliot to Derby, Jan. 13, 1876, *Turkey No. 2* (1876), 85.

<sup>9</sup>Newton, Lord, *Lord Lyons*, II, 95. Derby had also stated in this connection that "A sovereign who can neither keep the peace at home nor pay his debts abroad, must expect to submit to some disagreeable consequences." Quoted in Newton, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>MacColl, M., *The Eastern Question*, 58.

<sup>11</sup>Hanotaux, G., *Contemporary France*, IV, 103.

<sup>12</sup>Contrary to the numerous and authoritative accounts, this Memorandum was not prepared without the knowledge of the English. Correspondence in the *Parliamentary Papers* shows that Lord Odo Russell, the British Ambassador at Berlin, was constantly informed by Bismarck as to the steps taken. Cf. *Turkey No. 3* (1876), 132-5; Harris, *op. cit.*, 288-374, and Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 32-5.

<sup>13</sup>Numerous reasons are given for England's refusal to adhere to this Memorandum, ranging from the statement that she could not be a party to "attack upon the head of the Mohammedans of India," (Viscount Sandon in the Commons on July 30, 1878, *Hansard*, Ser. II, vol. 242, 660) to the affirmation that she refused to be brought into line through the orders of the three chancelleries. This second step was "considered an insolent dictation." (Quoted from the Memoirs of Carnarvon of May 17, 1876, in Hardinge, Sir A., *Life of Carnarvon*, II, 330.) It is hardly necessary to add that most of the reasons given for non-adherence were not only spurious but some of them were absurd. In this connection cf. Lee, D. E., *Great Britain and the Cyprus Convention Policy of 1878*, 24-6.

templating. It would be quite naïve to suppose that the English did not know what a disservice they were doing to the Concert of Europe by their non-adhesion to the Memorandum. "If one effect of the British Government's action at this point was to encourage Turkey in obstinacy," wrote Dawson,<sup>14</sup> "another was to throw her still more upon Great Britain's hands and support. . . . Henceforth, it was impossible to shake the Sultan's faith that Great Britain stood behind him, ready to protect him to the last extreme against the designs of his enemies; and this faith encouraged the Porte again and again in opposing the collective pressure of the Powers." Gladstone and Stratford de Redcliffe, as far apart as they were concerning the solution of the Eastern Question, held the view that "a valuable opportunity of rendering a great service to the cause of civilization had been wilfully sacrificed."<sup>15</sup> Thus the efforts of the concerted Powers were frustrated by the indecision and indirection of British statesmen, and the Powers whose consuls were murdered, contented themselves by collecting a neat sum of indemnity from the Porte.<sup>16</sup>

Yet the course of events could not be arrested by the safeguarding of the interests of the Powers. Towards the end of June, 1876, Serbia and Montenegro had already declared war upon Turkey. This made the Turks furious and they were determined to crush the simmering revolts first in Bulgaria. And naturally they fell back to the same method of suppressing these uprisings as they had done in the past. Like the inefficient officer of justice who, when unable to find or unable to punish the guilty criminal, falls upon the nearest neighbor or relative of the culprit, so the Turks fell upon the innocent folk of the country. A large band of "irregular troops whose methods in dealing with insurgents were oriental in the highest degree,"<sup>17</sup> fell upon the unprotected Bulgarian villages in May, massacring the Christian inhabitants and destroying everything they found. In a district of Batak it was reported that women and children, old and young and all were put to sword.<sup>18</sup>

As the accounts of these massacres became known the peoples of Europe were shocked. Several weeks after the incident was known and printed in the newspapers, Disraeli, "after an analysis of the situation as cynical and cold-blooded as any ascribed to Bismarck, could look dispassionately on the sacrifices of the Bulgarian Christians without advocating any attack on the assassins."<sup>19</sup> He tried to discount both the authenticity

<sup>14</sup>In *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, edited by War, Sir A. W., and Gooch, G. P., III, 98-9.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.* Cf. also Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 34-5.

<sup>16</sup>The French exacted 600,000 francs of indemnity, while the Germans were content with only 300,000 francs. *Vid.* Elliot, *op. cit.*, 228.

<sup>17</sup>Tyler, *op. cit.*, 65.

<sup>18</sup>The latest and perhaps the most elaborate account of the Bulgarian massacres, based on official reports and studies, is that of H. Temperley, "The Bulgarian and other Atrocities," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XVII (1931), 106-46. Cf. also Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 50-101.

<sup>19</sup>Holt, L. C., and Chilton, A. W., *The History of Europe*, 194.

and the exaggerated nature of the entire affair by calling it "coffee-house babble" in the Commons.<sup>20</sup>

Ten, twenty, or thirty thousand innocent victims were of course not sufficient to change the policy of a world-empire;<sup>21</sup> to change on such grounds would not be the statesmanlike way of looking at the matters! But it was sufficient to arouse the English public which, in one manner or another, displayed its disapproval of the government's negative and vacillating policy in dealing with the Eastern Question. It is true that the most mortal blow came from the Grand Old Man, the retired leader of the opposition, who thundered with excoriating speeches, and later brought forth a fiery pamphlet on the massacres,<sup>22</sup> in which he coined his "bag and baggage"<sup>23</sup> phrase. It is also true that ardent and zealous canons of the Gospel, such men as the "silver-tongued" Liddon and Malcolm MacColl (especially the latter), aired their opposition to the Moslem creed and Mohammedanism by indulging in this controversy. Yet it must be recognized that whatever these men wrote and uttered about the oppressed peoples of the Balkans was not far from the actualities, and any possible over-emphasis did not rest upon exaggeration or hypocrisy. It is, moreover, equally true that a great many of the distinguished intellectuals of liberal leaning (Frederick Harrison being almost the sole exception), headed by irrefragable Freeman, incomparable Goldwin Smith, and John (later Viscount) Morley, let loose a torrent of criticism upon the government, some of which was rather personal. Yet the government ignored it all for a time—and fortunately for a time only—while the people did not. The government could make light of the charges, but eventually public opinion induced the government to "fall back upon the idea of a European Conference."<sup>24</sup>

In August, 1876, Disraeli slipped out of the House of Commons and entered the Lords as the Earl of Beaconsfield,<sup>25</sup> but the spectre of a conference over the Eastern Question haunted him even in the Lords. "I fear," he wrote to Derby on September 4, "there must be a Congress, tho' I hate it, and I am quite confident we cd. have managed without it, had it not been for this Bulgarian bogey."<sup>26</sup> On October 4 in a Cabinet

<sup>20</sup>Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 45.

<sup>21</sup>So Elliot had despatched from Constantinople; so spoke his chief in the Commons (on August 11, 1876): "... was it [the massacre of so many thousands] sufficient reason to make the British Empire, as Harcourt demanded, denounce its treaties and change its traditional policy?" Quoted in Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 47; cf. also *Turkey* No. 1 (1877), 221.

<sup>22</sup>*The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*. "There cannot be much doubt," wrote Ramsay Muir (*Prime Ministers of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Hearnshaw, F. J. C., 248), "that, but for Gladstone, the England of the 'seventies would have accepted the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria as placidly as we have accepted those in Armenia."

<sup>23</sup>The expression "bag and baggage," according to some, is not Gladstone's coinage. On September 29, 1821, Stratford Canning, writing to George Canning, had said: "As a matter of humanity I wish with all my soul that the Greeks were put in possession of their whole patrimony, and the Sultan was driven bag and baggage into the heart of Asia." Quoted in Lane-Poole, S., *Life of Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe*, I, 307.

<sup>24</sup>Cecil, A., *British Foreign Secretaries*, 291.

<sup>25</sup>Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, V, 488-9.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, VI, 54.

meeting the government decided to request the Porte to assent to a six weeks' armistice, "and if accepted, a conference to follow."<sup>27</sup> Upon this bit of counsel from London and also upon receiving an ultimatum from Russia, the Porte was forced to accept the conditions proposed.

Salisbury, who had written to Carnarvon on September 13 that "the Turk's teeth must be drawn even if he be allowed to live,"<sup>28</sup> was to assume the office of the dentist and would perhaps have made a good surgical job of this dental operation had not his actions been thwarted by his superiors at home and his turcophile colleague at the Conference. His selection for this post, however, was not accidental. Derby and especially Disraeli knew him. In an undated sheet, marked "conf." Disraeli wrote to Salisbury: "I want you to go. That is my idea."<sup>29</sup> But, as is true in a great many cases where the avowed ideal aim is sacrificed or disavowed at the expense of political expediency and for diplomatic subterfuge, so it was in this case. In the words of Argyll,<sup>30</sup> if the English government had sent one of its "most distinguished members to Constantinople," it had declared to the Turks beforehand that the "guns were loaded with blank cartridges." Under such an inauspicious augury and with procedures of duplicity and trickery no serious-minded person, aware of the gravity of the situation, expected much out of the Conference.

We are not particularly concerned with the Conference or with its abortive efforts except for certain salient features which not only bear upon, somewhat incidentally, the Armenian Question, but which also serve as illustrating the methods of the Powers in their dealing with the Porte. These—the matter and the manner of dealing with the Porte—were to be the usual routine of the politicians in their specious efforts to obtain a somewhat satisfactory solution to the Eastern Question. Viewed from this aspect the years 1876-78 are the high water marks in the history of the Eastern Question, as they are the formative years of the Armenian Question.

On December 11 the Conference held the first of its preliminary meetings. These were held among the representatives of the Powers (Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia) alone for the purpose of formulating a program to be presented to the Porte in the plenary session. Thus a program of reforms was prepared by December 20 as a "minimum irréductible," consisting of five instruments.<sup>31</sup> But the appearance of the Sultan's representatives at the Conference at once convinced the representatives of the Powers (except Elliot, who was playing

<sup>27</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, II, 89.

<sup>28</sup>Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 87.

<sup>29</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 84.

<sup>30</sup>Hansard, Ser. III, vol. 232, 49.

<sup>31</sup>For this proposed program, *vid. Turkey No. 2* (1877), 148-68.

his turcophile and anti-reformist role with perfect consummation) that all the formulation and the preparation of the preliminary program was so much waste, and that it would have been well for them to stay at their respective homes and "tweedle their thumbs." At the plenary session of December 28 "the Turks raised objection to each of the five proposals, except on some minor points."<sup>82</sup> They stated that they were not empowered even to discuss any of the points in the proposed program. It became obvious that they were doing what many others would have done under similar circumstances. They were dancing to the tune played at London, and in this musical rehearsal England's position, though sometimes uncertain and often vacillating, was quite consistent and unmistakably clear. Derby might repeatedly write to the Porte stating that "it would be unwise . . . to count upon more than the moral support of Her Majesty's Government in the event no satisfactory solution of the present difficulties being found,"<sup>83</sup> yet that moral support, coming from London and given unconditionally, was sufficient to frustrate the united efforts of the five remaining Powers. Aside from this, the Turks had another card to play and they played it with perfect finesse.

On December 23 the Sultan, Abdul Hamid II, upon the urgent pressure of the Young Turk leader Midhat Pasha, issued a constitution—the first Ottoman Constitution, a rather liberal instrument for the time.<sup>84</sup> This Constitution contained some reform provisions concerning the European as well as the Asiatic provinces of the Empire, and thus the Turks were able to say to the Powers: "Here we are proposing to reform our governmental institutions by this Constitution; there you are deliberating over this matter of reforms, but the reforms you may propose are embodied in this Constitution; therefore, your deliberation is a waste of your time." And the card thus played did the trick, though the Constitution contained none of the essential and main points of the reforms demanded by the Powers, viz., the reorganization of the gendarmerie, judicial reforms, the modified method of appointing the valis, the peaceful eviction of the Circassians from European Turkey, and the appointment of a commission to supervise the execution of the promised reforms,—all of which were the principal points of the "minimum irréductible" proposal. Then the representatives of the Powers realized that it was hopeless to try to force anything upon the Porte through moral suasion unless it was also backed by effective force. And effective force was not to be used, for Derby maintained his customary stand: "Her Majesty's

<sup>82</sup>Salisbury to Derby, December 28, 1876, *Turkey* No. 2 (1877), 171. On January 4, 1877, he wrote to Derby: "Convincing the Turk is about as easy a matter as making a donkey canter." Quoted in Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 140.

<sup>83</sup>Derby to Elliot, May 25, 1876, *Turkey* No. 3 (1877), 2.

<sup>84</sup>This constitution was actually in force for only a few months; then it was suspended indefinitely (for 31 years, as later events proved) by the wily Sultan. A copy of it is found in the *Annuaire de l'Institut de Droit International*, II (1878), 296-316.

Government have decided that England will not assent to, or assist in, coercive measures, military or naval, against the Porte."<sup>85</sup> A number of additional plenary meetings were held in which the proposal of "minimum irréductible" was further reduced (thus actually the impossible was done!) and finally only two items were left in it upon which the Powers insisted. Even these were not acceptable to the Turks on the ground that their acceptance would compromise the dignity of the Porte.<sup>86</sup> Then all was up, for the Turks, supported by England and armed with the weapon of a stillborn Constitution, "opposed a polite refusal to all the arguments of the Powers till one by one the demands which had been raised were set aside,"<sup>87</sup> and the Conference broke up after its last session on January 20, 1877.

Two days later Salisbury confessed, in a despatch to Derby, his inability to accomplish anything, stating that "the principal object of my mission—the conclusion of peace between Russia and Turkey—has not been attained."<sup>88</sup> This was the last time that he frankly admitted the unsatisfactory working of English diplomacy in the Eastern Question. Not until the dark mid-'nineties, when it was obvious to all that no reforms of any kind could be had in the Armenian provinces, did he make another such frank confession, in admitting that "England had put her money on the wrong horse" by backing up the Turks since the Crimean War.

Such was the failure of this abortive Conference, and the impression of that failure cannot be fully reproduced in these days when failures of conferences are more frequent. But in the seventies of the last century it was quite different, and especially so in this Conference of Constantinople. The Concert of Europe had acted in unison on more than one occasion and had averted some serious crises. And at this Conference once more the Powers had come together to avert an impending war between Russia and Turkey; now they had failed in their effort.

This brief sketch of the Conference is given in connection with the Armenian Question because, in the first place, it clearly illustrates how difficult it was—if not impossible—for the Powers to agree on any set of

<sup>85</sup>Derby to Salisbury, December 22, 1876, *Turkey No. 2* (1877), 78. England's position at this Conference was not at all dissimilar to that she assumed exactly thirty years later at the Algieras Conference. Just before the latter Conference, according to Gooch (*History of Modern Europe*, 365), King Edward VII remarked to the French Ambassador Cambon: "Tell us what you wish on each point, and we will support you without restrictions or reserves."

<sup>86</sup>On Dec. 21, 1876, Salisbury wrote to Derby (Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 111): "The attitude of the Turks is indeed tiresome enough for everybody. . . . They all say that a Commission would compromise their 'dignity.' It's like a street-sweeper complaining that he has been splashed."

<sup>87</sup>Bright, *op. cit.*, IV, 524.

<sup>88</sup>He at first worked so harmoniously with the other representatives at the Conference that the English government was afraid something might really be accomplished along the avowed lines. On Dec. 28 Disraeli wrote to Derby (Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 111): "Sal[isbury] seems most prejudiced, and not to be aware, that his principal object, in being sent to Cons[antinople], is to keep the Russians out of Turkey, not to create an ideal existence for Turkish Xians."

"He is more Russian than Ignatiev: *plus Arabe que l'Arabe!*"

means by which the Eastern Question might be settled. In the second place, it illustrates with equal clarity the sham battle which the Powers waged with the Turks when the latter were "usually intelligent enough to perceive whether the Powers were in earnest or not."<sup>39</sup> And in the third place, it once more proves—and it again had to be proved later—that the Turkish government was never intending to be induced by means of mere moral suasion *to introduce reforms which would establish legal and political equality between its Mohammedan and non-Mohammedan subjects*. At this Conference, more than at any other such gathering, their objection to European interference in their affairs was brought to the surface; what they strenuously objected to "was not so much as to the substance of the proposal as to entering into an engagement to carry it out."<sup>40</sup> That statement coming as it does from Salisbury sums up a good deal, and that explains the Turkish procrastination and vacillation in the matter of introducing reforms. "The Sultan was hurt that the Great Powers should bind him by treaty to the fulfilment of his promises."<sup>41</sup> And that would have been not only inexpedient but extremely embarrassing indeed!

On February 7 the French Ambassador at Berlin, Gontaut-Biron, told von Bülow that the "Unhappy Eastern Question would never terminate," to which the great father of a greater son prophetically replied: "It has only just begun."<sup>42</sup> True enough, the Question had just begun. That beginning is important, and we shall hear of it as we proceed in this narrative history of the Armenian Question in its earliest phase, for it is indelibly tinted with every shade of the Eastern Question.

The Armenian Patriarch and the National Assembly at Constantinople were following the events in other parts of the Empire studiously and diligently. They were especially interested to know what the Powers were preparing to do on behalf of the Christian subjects of the Porte. And when in the fall of 1876, it was known that they were to confer with the Porte over this matter at Constantinople, then they were certain that at such a gathering Armenian affairs might also be considered. This was more than a mere "happy idea" to be entertained by them at this juncture of events.

When it was not definitely known that the Conference was to deal *only* with European Turkey, the Armenians thought it fit to impress upon the representatives of the Powers that their lot in the Asiatic provinces was no better than that of the Christians in the Balkans; nay, it was worse. Especially now, when the Sultan was causing the removal of marauding Circassians from his European possessions into the Asiatic

<sup>39</sup>Newton, *op. cit.*, II, 224-5.

<sup>40</sup>Salisbury to Derby, *Turkey* No. 2 (1877), 198.

<sup>41</sup>MacColl, *op. cit.*, 421.

<sup>42</sup>Quoted in Hanotaux, *op. cit.*, IV, 129.

provinces because of European remonstrances,<sup>43</sup> the position of the Armenians was becoming almost unbearable. They thought that their grievances were equally deserving of the attention of the Powers. It is true that they had not rebelled against the Porte as had the Bosnians, the Herzegovinians, the Montenegrins, and the Bulgarians, but that did not mean that the grounds and justification to rebel were wanting. "If, in order to secure the sympathy of the European Powers, it was necessary to raise an insurrection," said the Patriarch to Salisbury on December 6, "then there would be no difficulty to start such a movement."<sup>44</sup> Certainly not! These Circassians thus transplanted, or rather, let loose in Asia Minor, were ready to fall upon the unprotected and defenseless Armenian peasants, inflicting upon them all sorts of injuries and injustices, and usually depriving them of their wherewithal. They were permitted to settle in any part of Asia Minor, but were especially encouraged to proceed to the Armenian provinces,<sup>45</sup> since it was the Sultan's desire to increase the Mohammedan population of these provinces. Thus on top of the Turkish tax-farmer, the irresponsible and licentious zaptiehs (the Turkish police), and the wild Kurdish tribes who wrought havoc among the Armenian peasants, now there came, or was about to come a fourth group of oppressors. They too were the chosen ones of the government at Constantinople, for all of their abusive acts were to be winked at by that government. At its bidding they could join the pack of wolves to make sure of the death of the lamb, already enfeebled and lying prostrate.

Such was the trap set for the Armenian peasants, from the clutches of which they could not possibly escape. They could find no court official who would punish the Kurds who had carried away their cattle, or had despoiled their fields of crops, or had robbed them at their homes, or, what is worse, had slain their sons and kidnapped and raped their daughters. They could find no government officials to restrain the demands of the greedy tax-farmer, whose primary object was to extort from them all that the traffic would bear. (In this respect, and in this *alone*, the Turkish peasant was hardly better off than the Armenian, except that he could seek justice in a court where he was entitled to a hearing while that was denied to the Armenian.) For the suffering of these wrongs they had petitioned, complained and protested in the past, through the Patriarch and the National Assembly. But their supplications fell upon deaf ears

<sup>43</sup>The transplanting of the Circassians, who were the scourge of the Christians in the Balkans, was one of the points upon which the Powers insisted at the Conference; the Porte did not like the idea of doing this through compulsion, but already a great many of them had found their way into Asia Minor. The Armenians might as well have complained as the Irish did, when England sent some of her notoriously inefficient servants to govern the Irish Pale: "The eagles," wrote Goldwin Smith (quoted in Phillips, W. A., *The Revolution in Ireland*, 13), "took wing for the Spanish main, the vultures descended upon Ireland." The Porte had no eagles to speak of, but her flock of vultures were to descend upon Armenia.

<sup>44</sup>Salisbury to Derby, Dec. 7, 1876, *Turkey* No. 2 (1877), 4.

<sup>45</sup>There, the Sultan and his government thought, the Circassians would act as a make-weight in case of any future uprising, and also would serve readily in an impending war against Russia.



and all their efforts to seek redress from such wrongs and injustices were fruitless. Now, however, at the time of the Constantinople Conference, an unusual opportunity had presented itself. Now once more they could make their grievances known to the Porte, and if it would promise, with the guarantees of the Powers, to take measures for the express purpose of ameliorating their lot, then the conditions would be infinitely better. This was a streak of optimism running through their thinking system that was soon to be transformed into pessimism.

The grounds of these grievances were already familiar to the English Ambassador as he apprised Derby in a despatch of September 24, 1876.<sup>46</sup> "A movement of discontent," he wrote, "has been exhibited by the Armenians. Their complaints refer chiefly to the exactions to which they are subjected by the tax-gatherers, and to the depredations which they suffer from the Koords, against which the government afford them no protection, . . . ." The next thing was to let the Conference know of these grievances,<sup>47</sup> if the delegates participating at that Conference were not already familiar with them. The Patriarch and the National Assembly would attend to that. Then they would demand from the Conference that "whatever the Porte was to promise and grant to her non-Mohammedan subjects in Europe, she should also promise and grant the same to the Armenians in the Asiatic provinces."<sup>48</sup> The Patriarch had already expressed the hope, in his interview with Salisbury,<sup>49</sup> "that the Conference will not insist upon the Porte conceding to the provinces which had risen against the Government privileges which would be denied to those which had remained quiet, but which were entitled to equal consideration." In the first instance, the Armenians would bring this demand before the Porte and then take it to the Conference, either with or without its approval. Of course by stating their demands in this form the Armenians did not realize that they were supplying the Turks with an extra card. And with that card in their hands, the Turks could address the Powers: "You are asking us to give special privileges to certain Ottoman subjects. If such a concession is made, then similar demands will be pressed upon us by other groups in the Empire. Therefore, we find it inexpedient and unjust to treat our subject races unequally." This was not a weak argument for the Porte to advance at the Conference. For this reason the Porte was quite anxious to have the Armenians proceed.

<sup>46</sup>Turkey No. 1 (1877), 375.

<sup>47</sup>At this time the Armenians were making every effort to attract the attention of Europe. Mr. Seth Apcar, a wealthy Armenian resident of British India, issued (in London) a pamphlet in French entitled *Mémoire sur la situation actuelle des Arméniens et sur leur avenir, respectueusement transmis aux chancelleries des grandes puissances*, in which he stated that Europe should concern itself with the fate of the Armenian subjects of the Porte. Of course the Armenians were unaware that the Conference was to limit its deliberations to reforms in European Turkey alone.

<sup>48</sup>Records, Dec. 10/22, 1876, 317.

<sup>49</sup>Salisbury to Derby, Dec. 7, 1876, Turkey No. 2 (1877), 4.

The Armenians were willing, as on subsequent occasions, to act as dupes in the hands of the Porte, sometimes even consciously, hoping that some good might come out of such acts. The encouragement coming from the Porte induced them to double their vigour and energy. In the session of the National Assembly on December 3/15, and also in a secret session<sup>50</sup> of December 10/22, their demands were formulated in a resolution to be presented to the Conference. Now they learned that the Porte was the only channel through which these demands might be placed before that gathering, and even then without certainty of receiving any consideration, for the Conference had already refused to consider similar demands from the Greeks of Thessaly, Epirus, and Crete.<sup>51</sup> Thus the idea at first enthusiastically entertained by the Armenians had now to be abandoned; and, besides the unwillingness of the Conference to deal with the Armenian matters, the Patriarch had not as yet presented these matters formally to the Porte when the Turkish Constitution was promulgated.<sup>52</sup> These two obstacles, the one a technicality and the other a clever move made by the Porte, were sufficient to render all the efforts of the Armenians futile.

Nor were the efforts of the Armenians in Russia to have the Tsar act on behalf of their kinsmen in Turkey more successful. On December 3/15 the Armenian leaders of Russia addressed a petition to the Tsar and prayed that His Majesty would protect the interests of the Armenians of Turkey; it was hoped that the Tsar would insist for equal consideration of Armenian interests, along with those of other non-Mohammedan races of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>53</sup> All of these were of no avail, and the Armenians, with regret but without remorse, witnessed the failure of the Conference.<sup>54</sup> The words of von Bülow<sup>55</sup> may once more be recalled: the Eastern Question had "just begun," not only as an insoluble problem with which the diplomats were to be kept busy, but it also had given serious concern to the non-Mohammedan elements of the Empire. And not the least concerned with it were the Armenians.

The upshot of the refusal of the Conference to concern itself with the woes of the Armenians was to drive them back to the Porte for the betterment of their lot. This was like a sinking man's clinging to a serpent, but that was the only alternative and the only "practical" ex-

<sup>50</sup>This is the only secret session of the Assembly of which there is a printed report in the *Records*. No record of any other secret session is extant.

<sup>51</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 129 and note. The Greek Patriarch and the Synod, probably at the invitation of the Porte, also made such demands; these too were thrown out of the Conference. *Ibid.* 135.

<sup>52</sup>The Patriarch had presented a list of complaints in Sept., but then "the usual apathy was shown, and, although a commission was appointed to enquire into the matter, nothing had been done." Elliot to Derby, Sept. 26, 1876, *Turkey* No. 1 (1877), 375.

<sup>53</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 150, taken from the Armenian daily *Meshak* of Tiflis (Dec. 16/29, 1876). It is well to remember that the Armenians of Russia were for the extension of Russian rule over the Armenian provinces of Turkey.

<sup>54</sup>On this occasion the Armenian daily *Massis* of Constantinople wrote: "The chorus of the Conference had ended in demonstration of general dissatisfaction . . . . The theme of the play fell to the ground and became mixed in the whispers of the audience. Now the actors departed, carrying with them something with which they may conjure in their leisure moments as to the evolution of human affairs." Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 160, note 1.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.* ante, p. 51 and note 42.

pedient open before them. Besides, it was not difficult for the Armenian leaders at the Turkish capital to come to such a point of view. Probably most of them preferred the rule of the Sultan to that of the Tsar. The source of such a view was the influence of the English Ambassador and the government he represented at Constantinople. The views of these men, of course, had nothing to do with the fact that the Armenian inhabitants of these provinces would much rather be under the restraining yoke of the Tsar—or of any other ruler, for that matter—than under the despotic and unbearable yoke of the Sultan. Yet the views of these men prevailed, for a time at least. During the early sessions of the Constantinople Conference December 1/13 the Turks had set the Armenian quarter of the city of Van to fire; over 500 Armenian stores were burned. The wealth of the Armenian merchants was plundered and carried away by the soldiery and the police.<sup>56</sup> This had made the relation of the Armenians with the Turks more strained than ever; once more it was shown that if those responsible for the acts were the populace and the roving Kurds, the government was the *fons et origo malorum*. But when the Turkish Constitution was promulgated the Armenians of the Capital almost forgot the sufferings of their kinsmen and were jubilant over the issue of this picayune instrument. Even the most uncompromising of provincial Armenian leaders, ex-Patriarch Khrimian, who at the time of the above-mentioned fire in his native city, had lamented the sufferings of his fellowmen in a wailing essay entitled "Vankoyzh" ("The sad News of Van"),<sup>57</sup> now extolled the verities and virtues embodied in the Constitution in another beautiful essay entitled "The Time and the Thought." Now the time had come, "the Time, delivering liberty; the Time bringing with it this new-born child, the Constitution."<sup>58</sup> The well-known poet T. Terzian (1838-1909) also hailed the coming of a new era with the Constitution in his poem "To the Liberator,"<sup>59</sup> in which he praised the deeds and ideals of Midhat Pasha.

Thus these simple-minded and naïve souls thought it was not difficult to compromise with the Porte. And their puerile hopes seemed almost to be fulfilled; for, when the representatives of the Powers had gone home in search for a solution of the Eastern Question, the new Sultan showed some signs of intelligence and ability, and a liberal taste in governmental affairs, though only for a short time. If the Kurds were running rampant with their raids and plunders and pillages in the Armenian provinces, as reported by the foreign consuls resident there,<sup>60</sup> the Armenians of the city were participating in the new Turkish Parliament, set up by the

<sup>56</sup>Turkey No. 15 (1877), 8.

<sup>57</sup>Collected Works of Father Khrimian (in Armenian), 253-8. The essay was printed in Constantinople, but its sale was prohibited by the government. Another Armenian paper, *Manzoumei Efkiar*, was suppressed for printing the news of the fire in Van.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>59</sup>Yeremian, S., *Literary Figures* (in Armenian), Ser. III, 592-4.

<sup>60</sup>Turkey Nos. for the year 1877 bear eloquent testimony to some of these affairs.

Constitution. The Parliament was opened by the Sultan on March 19, 1877 (two weeks before the London Protocol was delivered to the Porte),<sup>61</sup> with a speech from the throne.<sup>62</sup> "I believe," he said, "that it was in absolute urgency to guarantee liberty and equality to my subjects, and I put an end to my arbitrary regime." If such statements ever were intended to convey contrary meanings, then here was the occasion. Just as the Eastern Question had only begun, so had the arbitrary rule of this morbid Oriental despot. This "Model Parliament" of the Ottoman Empire lasted only a few months and then it was prorogued *sine die*, not to meet again for thirty-one years.

While this false rapprochement between the Armenians and the Turks was in process, and some Armenians were rendering exceedingly valuable services to the government,<sup>63</sup> the fate of the Empire was about to be decided on the battlefield. After the breakup of the Conference Gorchakov addressed, on January 31, a circular to the Powers asking them what they thought would be the next necessary step in their dealing with the Porte. Before they had time to give serious thought to the matter, the suggestion was issued from St. Petersburg to the effect that they once more come together and agree upon a protocol to be presented to the Porte. As a result, the ambassadors met Derby at the Foreign Office on March 31 and signed the London Protocol.<sup>64</sup> It was a mild and brief version of the "minimum irréductible" of Conference fame. The Porte's reply, declining to accept this Protocol, was issued on April 9. "Strong in the justice of her confidence in God," proclaimed this reply, "she [the Porte] declares that she ignores what may have been decided without her and against her. . . ."<sup>65</sup> But the expression of the Porte's confidence in God caused, it seems, the loss of Russia's confidence in the Porte; for about a fortnight later the Russians felt justified in saying: "Having exhausted our peaceful efforts" we are obliged "to proceed to more determined action." War was declared on April 24.<sup>66</sup>

The Russian sword was unsheathed to cut the Gordian knot; but, paraphrasing what the Romans said, in the clash of arms the reason is silent. What the course of such a clash between the blind and the one-eyed was, how the Armenians fared during this fray which was waged mainly in their homeland, and what they expected of it will be the subject of the following chapter.

<sup>61</sup>It is important to note that the Turkish government was proceeding cautiously and adroitly in its course of constitutionalism. It was most expedient to use that form at this critical time in order to prevent the Powers from making awkward demands.

<sup>62</sup>This speech is printed in the *British and Foreign State Papers*, 68 (1877-1878), 817-22.  
<sup>63</sup>Oadian Effendi as the councillor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sent to London in December of 1876 to explain the course of his government's conduct at the Constantinople Conference. Vahan Effendi, the councillor to the Ministry of Justice, was subsequently sent to the capitals of Europe to explain to the governments why his sovereign had dismissed and exiled the darling of their fancy, the liberal leader Midhat Pasha. *Vid.* Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 177-9; also Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 129 on Oadian Effendi's mission in London.

<sup>64</sup>Hertslet, E., *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, IV, 2563-6.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 2568-75.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, 2598-9. The declaration is referred to as the Manifesto of the Emperor of April 24.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WAR, THE PEACE, AND THE ARMENIANS

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This war, though certain to end in Turkish defeat, wd. be desperate and bloody, and especially dangerous to the Armenians and other Christians in Asia, whom we ought not to forget.—W. E. FORSTER.

The Armenian highlands have always been, since the most ancient times, sporting ground for warring armies of Europe and Asia. They have also been an apple of discord among the rival groups for an equal length of time. The Hittites and the Parthians, the Assyrians and the Persians, the Medes and the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, and the Mongols held these lands during the palmy days of their ascendancy in world history. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were only two principal rivals, the Russian and the Turk, the one-eyed and the blind, who had already waged three bloody wars for the possession of these highlands. Each one of these wars, in the nature of things, was most disastrous to the Armenians. And the War of 1877-78 was to be the most disastrous of them all.

Only a few months after the beginning of hostilities the Russians crossed the Asiatic frontiers of Turkey and advanced into the Armenian territories. Then the Turks suspected that such an easy advance on the part of Russia was only possible through the complicity if not with the open cooperation of the Armenians. The presence of some distinguished Armenian generals in the Russian army, such men as Loris-Melikov, Der-Ghougasov, and Lazarev, who were the native subjects of the Tsar and of course fighting for him, was sufficient to rouse the wrath of the defeated Turks against the Armenians.<sup>1</sup> That suspicion, unfounded as it might have been, was sufficient to cause the Turks to fall upon the Armenians at the first opportunity and wreak their misplaced vengeance. So in June and July, when the Russians suffered some reverses and had to abandon their advanced position, the Turks let loose hordes of Kurds and Circassians upon the Armenian villages near the border lines. This was like a discharge of poisonous gas upon a wide open front. As at Batak a year earlier, so now in these villages, the aged and young, the male and female, all fell at the stroke of the scimitar and the volley of the firearm.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"When foreign armies enter the Ottoman Empire," wrote Bryce (*Transcaucasia and Ararat*, 425, 4th ed.), "whether it be in Bulgaria or Armenia, they are welcomed as deliverers by the subject populations; and when they retreat, it is upon those unhappy subjects that the inhuman vengeance of the Turkish soldiery is wreaked."

<sup>2</sup>These atrocities are recorded by C. B. Norman, the special correspondent of the *Times*, in his *Armenia and the Campaign of 1877*.

On June 13 the Cossacks were overwhelmed at Bayazid and surrendered. Then the Kurds and other irregulars fell upon them and upon the populace, and murdered 970 persons. Mukhtar Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces, knew that these irregular Kurds and Circassians were useless as soldiers, yet he retained "a body of 4,000 of them in his own camp," wrote the special correspondent of the *Times*,<sup>3</sup> ". . . and by keeping them in its pay the Turkish Government silently approved their acts." A letter of July 19 described the Kurdish atrocities in Van and Bayazid "where these outrages on Christians were beginning to bear fruit in the literal starvation of the Turkish armies; all the stores of grain, herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep belonging to Armenians were considered fair pillage by these gentry."<sup>4</sup> A month later it was reported that the "whole town of Bayazid is in ruins and filled with the bodies of Christians."<sup>5</sup>

As the news of these horrors reached the Russian borders the Armenians there took to flight and went into the Caucasus. "Between Kiupri Kui and this [near Kars, some forty miles apart]," wrote the same correspondent,<sup>6</sup> "I have not seen one Christian village which has not been abandoned in consequence of the cruelties committed on the inhabitants." The Bayazid massacre in which 2,400 were killed,<sup>7</sup> is nothing compared with what was done in the district of Alashkerd, near the southeastern frontier. In June and July when the Russians retreated, this district was recaptured by the Turks. Faik Pasha, the vali of Van, asked the chief of Haideranly Kurdish tribes to supply 8,000 Kurdish recruits.<sup>8</sup> The vali did get the quota of Kurds, but these, instead of proceeding to Van to take part in its defense, fell upon the villages in the district of Alashkerd and desolated 24 of them.<sup>9</sup> "Out of 122 villages in the Alashkerd plain," reported Norman, "all but nine are entirely deserted."<sup>10</sup> Mr. Forster had prophesied the consequences of this war, as indicated in the quotation at the head of this chapter, but he perhaps did not think that wholesale massacres would be a part of it.

The news of these events reached Constantinople, and there the Armenian members in the Turkish Parliament for once had the privilege of free speech, in the course of which they gave vent to their anger by denouncing the government openly. The Armenian members, along with the Greeks and other non-Mohammedans, had allied themselves with the Turkish Progressive group and thus formed a bloc. They were willing to support the government's policy against the northern invader. On

<sup>3</sup>Norman, *op. cit.*, 221-2.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 260.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 279. Fifteen thousand according to Saroukhan; *vid. op. cit.*, 201.

<sup>9</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 201; Norman, *op. cit.*, 200.

<sup>10</sup>Norman, *op. cit.*, 299-300.

April 26 the Armenian Patriarch (upon the advice of the Turkish government), along with the heads of all other communities, visited the English Ambassador and is reported to have said that "the Armenian nation would far prefer to remain under the Ottoman rule to being placed under that of Russia. . . ."<sup>11</sup> This more or less harmonious cooperation was made possible upon one condition, namely, that reforms would be introduced and executed for the amelioration of the lot of the Armenians in the Armenian provinces. But the news of horrors from the frontier villages brought that cooperation to an end. When these were reported in the papers and debated in Parliament, and when even the government could not deny them, then the Armenian M. P.'s severely criticised the government. "The news of wholesale massacres," wrote a contemporary historian,<sup>12</sup> "shocked them profoundly and they in the sitting of June 14/26 threw the whole responsibility upon the government." Even the other Christian members of Parliament strengthened their courage and criticised the government for its laxity. "Two Greek M. P.'s impressively defended the Armenians,"<sup>13</sup> and most of the Turkish members for once found themselves in a rather embarrassing position, but they acted promptly in almost complete unison with the Armenians and Greeks to lodge protests at the Porte, demanding "that immediate steps be taken against the perpetrators of these horrors."<sup>14</sup> That was somewhat commendable, considering their attitude heretofore. "This [the debating in Parliament on Armenian affairs]," wrote an Armenian historian,<sup>15</sup> "was the first public hearing of the Armenian Question in Turkish official circles." Indeed it was! Any question involving the sacrifice of thousands of innocent lives deserves to be raised to the "dignity" of official circles.

As the petitions and protests, lodged at the Porte on behalf of the Armenians, gave rise to a great deal of discontent, and as in time of war such protests were deemed most improper and ill-timed, first the government forbade the newspapers to print the reports and news on debates of Parliament; then the sessions were required to be secret, and finally, on June 19/July 1, by the order of the Sultan, the Parliament was prorogued and the Constitution was suspended.<sup>16</sup> And if the Armenians were persistent in debating these matters in their own National Assembly, which body would make successive representations at the Porte through its President the Patriarch, then the wily Sultan would find ways to placate (not to say bribe) this high dignitary of the Armenian Church. On August 22/September 3 the Sultan invited him to the palace and, amidst

<sup>11</sup>*Turkey*, No. 25 (1877), 164.

<sup>12</sup>Nourikhan, M., *Contemporary History* (in Armenian), III, 455-6; quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 192.

<sup>13</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 191; cf. also Topchian, E., *Young Turkey and the Armenians* (in Armenian), 196-9.

<sup>14</sup>Nourikhan, *op. cit.*, III, 456.

<sup>15</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 193.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 193-4.

all sorts of seemingly consoling and condescending talk, he advised the Patriarch not to be discouraged, but to keep up his courage and enjoin his flock to stand by the Empire in these critical days. He did not deny the horrors, but said that "he himself was not responsible for the massacres and bloodshed."<sup>17</sup> Then, to cap his interview, the Sultan conferred upon this bewildered leader of a tried people the Osmanieh Mejidieh medal (the highest bestowed upon a non-Mohammedan subject of the Porte) as a sign of appreciation for the services the Patriarch had rendered to the Empire. In the words of the ex-Patriarch Khrimian, who had written another brilliant and remarkable essay on the massacres, "out of the ribs of the sheep, daisies are woven and thrown round the neck of the shepherd to decorate his breast."<sup>18</sup>

But even miseries, even the Armenian sufferings, have an end; in time either the victims pass away or the conditions change, enabling the victims to live on. With the Armenians it seemed that the former was the nearer to the actualities. Yet the conditions were actually changing and the outlook of the survivors from these bloody days upon life and especially upon their future was changing with the conditions. Just as in 1812 and in 1829, so now in 1877-78 the Russians were triumphing, and as before, "Europe, interested by the poets, novelists, and journalists in the fate of these unhappy provinces looked upon the doings of the Czar," if not in complete sympathy, at least without judgment against him.<sup>19</sup> The Armenians seemed to have realized now, as the war turned to be altogether one-sided and seemed to end in an overwhelming victory for Russia, that it would be well for them to look after their own affairs, instead of abiding any longer (if they could help it) in this Mezentian bondage with their unworthy master and treacherous neighbors. This would seem to the onlooker and unsympathetic observer like stabbing the "Sick Man" in the back in his hour of extreme agony. But how can an ungenerous and inhuman master expect the services of a subject, no matter how pliable, docile, and servile he might have been? If the services of the Armenians were not appreciated during the war,<sup>20</sup> and if instead

<sup>17</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 205. Such a cynical and false confession of lack of power, if not frequently made in modern times, was often repeated by some Oriental despot. Mahmoud of Ghazni conquered India early in the 11th century but could not govern his subjects there. Once a woman applied to him for justice. "How would you have me do you justice at such a distance?" said Mahmoud. "To what end then did you conquer us," replied the irate woman, "if you are not able to govern us?" Quoted in Voltaire's *General History*, IV, 240; la verité ed. Such a retort might have been expected from the Armenian Patriarch, but it would have been futile.

<sup>18</sup>Khrimian, *op. cit.*, 271. In this connection it may be added that the Armenians in Russia were not, naturally, indifferent to the sufferings of their kinsmen across the borders, some of whom had left their homes behind and sought shelter somewhere in the Caucasus. As the exodus of Armenians from Turkey took large proportions and as their misery multiplied, the Armenians of the Caucasus founded relief organizations, orphanages, settlement camps, and refugee centers where all might be fed and sheltered. They also raised considerable sums of money and sent them to the Patriarchate, so that it might relieve the distress of the Armenians in Turkey. *Id.* Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 206-209.

<sup>19</sup>Hanotaux, *op. cit.*, IV, 88.

<sup>20</sup>The Armenians in the European provinces had fought with the Turks against the Russians. *Id.* Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 221; cf. also *ante*, p. 56 and note 63.



they were manhandled and massacred, what then could they expect from such a master in the future?

It was with a mixed foreboding and faint hope—hope that became brighter and brighter with the passing of each day—that the Armenian leaders finally decided to sound out the Russian side; their future plans as to the manner of disposing of the Armenian provinces and as to their eventual fate. Besides, the war had been declared for the liberation of Christians; all sacrifices had been made for that avowed end; the Armenians, too, were Christians. Would not the Tsar and his government lend a helping hand to these eternally cursed and most miserably condemned of all subject peoples? The victory which his army was winning over his inveterate enemy was at least partly the work of Armenian generals; Loris-Melikov, Der-Ghougasov, Lazarev and others were the offspring of the Armenian race, and every one of these men was rendering yeoman service to the Tsar. Would not these men in any way call the attention of their master to the sufferings of their kinsmen in the Armenian provinces of Turkey? Would they not influence the Russian autocrat so that he would advance and uphold the Armenian cause along with that of the Christian populations of the Balkans? To all these questions the Armenian leaders had a positive answer.

More than these, however, the most important consideration which would have induced Russia to regard the Armenians in this light was that she had already, at the time of San Stefano preliminaries (January-February, 1878), occupied more than half of the Armenian tableland. As the victor over Turkey, it was expected that she would keep a considerable portion of that territory. Considering the treatment which the Armenians were receiving at the hands of their Ottoman master, especially during the 'seventies and in the course of the war, they would have been pleased to change their master—indeed, they were quite anxious to do so, if they could not secure for themselves autonomy or local self-government. And if in their effort for such a change they were heartily and unreservedly encouraged by an influential servant of the Tsar in the person of Count Ignatiev, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, then it was so much the better. Thus, it seemed that the Armenians had every prospect of obtaining something from the ensuing peace and the subsequent treaty provisions.

With these intents and purposes the Patriarch and the National Assembly displayed an inordinate activity (of course secretly) to acquaint Russia with the Armenian cause. On October 21/November 2 the Assembly met<sup>21</sup> for the purpose of preparing a "Pia Desideria"—a

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<sup>21</sup>These meetings of the Assembly are not recorded in the *Records*, but its proceedings are found in a report of Rev. Der Partoughian to the Armenian Catholicos dated Jan. 13/25, 1878; quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 259-60, from the Archives of the Catholicos at Etchmiadzin.

memorandum in which were to be couched the modest desires of the Armenians of Turkey. This was to go to the Catholicos George IV, the head of the Armenian Church, who was a subject of the Tsar with his residence in Russian Armenia, and he was to present it to his august sovereign. In this "Pia Desideria" it was stated that if Russia did not intend to keep the Armenian provinces under her occupation, then she should ask the Porte to grant certain privileges to the inhabitants of these provinces similar to those to be granted to the Bulgarians, with the guarantee of the Tsar, that for the execution of these promises Russia might demand financial guarantees, and that Russian soldiers might be stationed in these provinces until these should be carried out.<sup>22</sup> The Catholicos was also requested to consider the possibility of appealing to the other Powers, and it was suggested that he send a representative to the peace negotiations where the Armenian case might be presented and considered.<sup>23</sup> But His Holiness was slow in accepting these suggestions, and before he made up his mind the negotiations leading to the Preliminary Basis of Peace were completed on January 19/31 at Adrianople. To the chagrin of the Armenians not a word was said about Armenia or concerning the Armenians in this document,<sup>24</sup> even though therein autonomy for Bulgaria and independence for Montenegro, Roumania and Serbia, and autonomous administration for Bosnia and Herzegovina were specifically mentioned.

Then the Armenians were quick in taking stock; they made hurried efforts in order not to be left out of the final settlements. Once more the Patriarch and the Assembly got together and the latter empowered the former to send his representatives to proper places where they might influence the Russians in favor of the Armenian cause. He at once sent instructions to the Armenian prelate at Adrianople, the Rev. G. Roosjooklian, to present the case of his people to the Grand Duke Nicholas, who had gone thither at the head of his victorious army. This energetic and patriotic churchman proceeded to his task rather tactfully and carried it out quite successfully.<sup>25</sup>

He was introduced to Count Ignatiev through M. Gierov, the Russian consul at Philippopolis. During the conversation the Rev. Roosjooklian asked Ignatiev if the Armenians would be given the same privileges as those to be granted to the Christians in the Balkans. Ignatiev replied that it would not be possible so to treat the Armenians. "Because," he said,

<sup>22</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 261.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 264.

<sup>24</sup>This Preliminary Basis is found in Hertset, *op. cit.*, IV, 2658-60.

<sup>25</sup>The effort put forth by Rev. Roosjooklian which resulted in the inclusion of Article 16 in the San Stefano Treaty is preserved in some details only in his "Memoirs" which were only partly printed in the Armenian paper *Rhazmig* of Philippopolis in 1906-1907 and reprinted in the Armenian weekly *Yergri Tsayn* of Tiflis (nos. 26-29, 1907), under the title "The Birth of the Armenian Question." A substantial portion of it is reproduced in Leo's *Documents on the Armenian Question* (in Armenian), 47-55.

"the Armenians in Armenia are dead elements even though for three years I have been an advocate and protector of the Armenian cause."<sup>26</sup> But he encouraged his interlocutor not to be dismayed, for in the future the Armenians would have liberty if they would become prepared for it.

On January 20/February 1 the results of this interview were transmitted to the Patriarch and a few days later Stephen Pasha Aslanian and H. Nourian had found their way into Adrianople and presented themselves to Rev. Roosjooklian as "counsellors" for the Armenian Question (at the San Stefano negotiations). These men suggested that the Reverend Father should once more present the Armenian case to Ignatiev and to the Grand Duke, and through them should claim the good wishes of the Tsar. Thereupon another interview was had with Ignatiev and the Grand Duke. The latter was found to be rather sympathetic towards the Armenians and optimistic concerning their future.<sup>27</sup> Later the "counsellors" had the chance of meeting Ignatiev and were told that the Grand Duke was already in touch with the Tsar about the Armenian matters, and then Ignatiev expressed the hope that in a day or two favorable instructions would be forthcoming from St. Petersburg.<sup>28</sup> Finally, on February 2/20 the Grand Duke was present at the Armenian church at Adrianople with Count Ignatiev, Nelidov, and a host of his staff. After the mass he was invited to take tea at the Armenian prelacy.<sup>29</sup> Just before his departure the Duke was moved to say: "Neither I nor my brother the Tsar will forget you."<sup>30</sup> On the following day when he was leaving for San Stefano the Reverend Father again presented himself to the Duke and again entreated for the safety and the well-being of his unfortunate brethren in Turkey. To this the Duke replied: "I shall soon be at San Stefano and there will have the chance of going over to see the Armenian Patriarch personally. You may inform him that your case will not be overlooked and that you will not be disillusioned in your hopes. . . . I am in correspondence with my brother about this matter."<sup>31</sup> Thus the Armenian affairs were placed in sympathetic hands and the results, it was thought, would be most heartening.

Only a few hours later on the same day (February 9/21) the Reverend Father was informed by Ignatiev that a favorable message had come from St. Petersburg. "Good news," he shouted, "your case is progressing; we have secured the consent of the Tsar and your case will be on the agenda for negotiations and then be included in the Russo-Turkish Treaty. You should at once present a plan or program to the Grand Duke showing the desires and wishes of the Armenians."<sup>32</sup> As by this time the "Pia

<sup>26</sup>Leo, *op. cit.*, 49.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 50-51.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 53-4.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

Desideria" had been turned into a neat program, it was immediately presented to the Duke.<sup>33</sup>

A few days later Ignatiev again saw the Reverend Father and told him that the treaty would have the following clause concerning the Armenians:

For the purpose of preventing oppressions and atrocities that have taken place in Turkey's European and Asiatic provinces, the Sultan guarantees, in agreement with the Tsar, to grant *administrative local self-government* to the provinces inhabited by Armenians (Erzerum, Mush, Van, Diarbekir, Sivas, etc.).<sup>34</sup>

This clause, prepared by Ignatiev himself, was satisfactory to the Armenians. But that did not settle the matter. In the subsequent negotiations this clause was not acceptable to the Turks and they categorically rejected it, stating that without further instructions from the Sultan they could not even discuss the Armenian matters.<sup>35</sup> The Armenian Patriarch went to San Stefano in person and entreated Ignatiev to insist upon local self-government in Armenian provinces; but that was of no avail, since the Russian delegates had no specific instructions to make this an important matter in the treaty. This fact, plus Turkey's stubborn resistance and the threatening rumors from London, convinced Ignatiev that the idea of local self-government must be dropped, and that instead something more acceptable must be presented to the Turks. The Armenians showed grave concern over such a *démarche* on the part of Ignatiev, but there was nothing to be done. They especially felt that they were not treated justly, since all the Christian subjects of the Porte were to be granted what they desired, while the Armenians could not get even local self-government.

The distance between exultant joy and dismal despondency is not so great as it may seem; the one frequently leads directly to the other. This was the first sip of disillusionment that the Armenians were to taste from the mortal cup, full of disappointments and despairs, which was to be offered to them in larger and larger measure intermittently during the succeeding thirty-five years, until finally their future, fate, destiny and all were to be "settled" by the Turks in a manner characteristically Turkish. The plan of autonomy was reduced to local self-government; the idea of local self-government was dropped in favor of reforms guaranteed by Russia in the Treaty of San Stefano; the reforms thus guaranteed were to be reduced to what amounted to reforms promised by the Porte in the Treaty of Berlin; and, unfortunately, these promises were never meant to be carried out. And the Armenians, true to the saying of

<sup>33</sup>The Patriarch was also trying to get into direct touch with the Tsar and Gorchakov. For this purpose two petitions were prepared, signed by himself and nine bishops of the Armenian church, and were to be forwarded to them on February 1/13. Copies of these were also sent to the Grand Duke. They are reproduced in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 274-8.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 284.

their untiring and unfailing friend that "to keep some unrealized ideals floating before one's eyes is better than to have no ideals at all,"<sup>38</sup> still expected that these reforms might be introduced. This expectation was just about to be materialized (by the reform program of February of 1914) when the day of reckoning was at hand, which put an end not only to their foredoomed hopes and unrealized dreams but also put an end to the lives of a sheer million of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

"To the Treaty of San Stefano," wrote Rolin-Jaequemyns<sup>37</sup> in 1887, "belongs the honour and merit of being the first international compact which mentions Armenia." If in 1887 it was thought that this treaty was graced by Article 16, then in 1878 the Armenians thought that the glory of that treaty was to be found in that Article, which read:

As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and Circassians.<sup>39</sup>

This was much less than the Armenians had expected, yet they were grateful without being satisfied. The local necessities demanded improvements and reforms; the safety of the Armenians was menaced by the Kurds and Circassians. These facts were, to be sure, no revelations, for they were known to all who had any familiarity with the affairs in the Near East. But the official international recognition of the facts, it was thought, would give them a better and quicker solution. Before, however, they had time to revel over these hopes, events were taking quite a different turn. The power that was instrumental in bringing about such a change, was England. She was about to play her decisive role by which the Armenians were to lose irretrievably and without hope. To the activities of that Power we shall now turn and at the same time look at the international affairs in their current setting.<sup>40</sup>

England's attitude in this early phase of the Eastern crisis was made abundantly clear by the stand she had taken in the Andrassy Note, in the Berlin Memorandum, and at the Constantinople Conference. She did not much mind seeing the non-Mohammedan subjects of the Porte put to the sword by thousands, but she dreaded to see Russia declare war upon her "faithful ally"<sup>40</sup> for the avowed purpose of saving these wretched

<sup>38</sup>Bryce, J., *South America*, 417.

<sup>39</sup>*Armenia, the Armenians and the Treaties*, 33. This little book by a distinguished international jurist, published in London in 1891, contains the two learned articles which he wrote for the *Revue de Droit International et de Législation Comparée* in 1887 and 1889. *Vid.* vols. 19 (1887), 284-325 and 21 (1889), 291-353.

<sup>40</sup>Hertslet, *op. cit.*, IV, 2686.

<sup>41</sup>The most complete and the most recent work on this phase of the Eastern Question is that of Wirthwein, W. G., *Britain and the Balkan Crisis, 1875-1878*.

<sup>42</sup>*Letters of Queen Victoria*, Ser. II, vol. II, 603.

souls from their cruel master the Sultan. She was not so much concerned about the preservation of the Concert of Europe or that of peace as she seemed to be about the upholding of the "independence and integrity" of the Ottoman Empire. She was not even so sensitive over the welfare and the well-being of her citizens at home as she was about the maintenance of her "imperial prestige"<sup>41</sup> abroad.

This was not of course a *Neue Kurse* in the foreign policy of this imperial power, but under the ministry of "that inscrutable and rather dandified figure,"<sup>42</sup> Disraeli,<sup>43</sup> it took such "un-English"<sup>44</sup> forms. Just as "the Roman satirist had complained bitterly that the Syrian Orontes flowed into the Tiber and brought with it its language and morals," so now the learned and wise sons of England would confess the presence of "ominous signs that the Indian Ganges has flown into the Thames and brought with it the lust of Empire."<sup>45</sup> But that did not matter. The fantastic ideas—fame, glory, prestige, and honor—nurtured in the fertile mind of Disraeli, were easily appropriated by an admiring Queen.<sup>46</sup>

Soon after the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, England declared her intention to observe neutrality, after being assured by the Tsar that her "interests"<sup>47</sup> were to be respected. But such a declaration of intention seemed to have little to do with her feelings towards her former ally, Turkey. Russian victories unnerved the English government; but particularly excited were the leading spirits of English foreign policy during these years—the redoubtable Beaconsfield and Her Majesty the Queen. "Pray for God's sake," wrote the Queen,<sup>48</sup> in a moment of frenzy to her Prime Minister, "lose no time and be prepared." Soon in a confidential memorandum of September 7 she urged Beaconsfield to be ready to cooperate with the Turks.<sup>49</sup> "Always putting off has been our weakness"<sup>50</sup> was her dictum. And when Beaconsfield took the matter up in the Cabinet, he found that it was not easy to bring ten or a dozen men to accept a harmonizing point of view. He reported that in a Cabinet meeting of October 5 "out of 12 members of the Government there were for an alliance with Turkey 6, neutral 3, against 3."<sup>51</sup> A month later he could not as yet make any progress along the line of "educating" his

<sup>41</sup>These terms, the "independence and integrity" of the Ottoman Empire, and the "imperial prestige," were the two humbugs of the day, and the premiums placed upon them were rather high.

<sup>42</sup>Wingfield-Stratford, E., *The Victorian Sunset*, 142-6.

<sup>43</sup>Though to the Queen the Prime Minister was the Earl of Beaconsfield, yet to the public he was and remains plain Mr. Disraeli.

<sup>44</sup>Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 249.

<sup>45</sup>MacColl, M., *England's Responsibility toward Armenia*, 67.

<sup>46</sup>The manner and degree in which Disraeli ingratiated himself with the Queen is best described in the unusually informing Prefaces of P. Guedalla, in *The Queen and Mr. Gladstone*, (2 volumes).

<sup>47</sup>These assurances given by the Tsar concerned the Suez Canal, Egypt, Constantinople, the Bosphorus, and the Dardanelles. *Vid. Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, III, 117.

<sup>48</sup>Quoted in Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 144.

<sup>49</sup>*Letters of Queen Victoria*, Ser. II, vol. II, 567-8.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 569.

<sup>51</sup>Quoted in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, II, 363.

colleagues. Under the date of November 1 he wrote to the Queen that "there are seven parties or policies in the Cabinet."<sup>52</sup>

Her Majesty always thought she ought to help her incomparable Beaconsfield, and volunteered to write letters to some recalcitrant peers so that they might be induced to support the government. The Duke of Argyll was the first to be reminded of his "improper" conduct. In her letter of June 4 he was told "that this war and its fearful consequences . . . would have been prevented had Russia not been encouraged in the utterly incomprehensible agitation carried on by some members and especially by one of my late Government."<sup>53</sup>

None of these reprimands, even from the Queen, could silence the opposition—not the least the proud Scottish peer of distinguished lineage. He always thought that the conduct of Her Majesty's government in relation to the Eastern crisis must be censured in the most severe strictures. When he knew that the wreckage of the Constantinople Conference was due to the British government, he had declared (on February 2, 1877): "I say you will have no peace in Europe, and you ought to have no peace in Europe, until the well-being of the Christian subjects of the Porte has been secured by the united action of the European Powers."<sup>54</sup> He could justify England's support of Turkey on one condition, namely, "that the Government of Turkey could be made at least a decent and tolerable government towards its own subjects."<sup>55</sup> He always justified revolts fomented within the Ottoman Empire against the Turkish government. "I say distinctly," he once said, "in this high place, on this housetop of Europe [the House of Lords], that every insurrection under the [Turkish] Government is a legitimate insurrection. Human beings under that Government owe it no allegiance."<sup>56</sup>

Nor was the criticism of the Government's policy limited to the Lords. In the Commons there were Gladstone, Hartington, Forster, Grant Duff, and Leonard Courtney—to name only a few of the noted men who in the severest terms condemned the foreign policy of the government *seriatim*, from the time it gave half-hearted support to the consular mediation (in August, 1875) to the end of the Eastern crisis. Notable among these was Grant Duff, as the leading light of a small band of M. P.'s that constantly kept before their constituencies the live issues of the day.<sup>57</sup> In numerous articles written for periodicals he always unequivocally stated that Russia was never a real danger to the British Empire. As a long time resident viceroy to India he spoke and wrote with the familiarity of

<sup>52</sup>Quoted in Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 104.

<sup>53</sup>*Letters of Queen Victoria*, Ser. II, vol. II, 538. Such a letter of similar import was also addressed to Granville on December 26. *Ibid.*, 580-1.

<sup>54</sup>*Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 232, 49.

<sup>55</sup>*Our Responsibilities for Turkey*, 6.

<sup>56</sup>On Feb. 20, 1877; quoted in Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 118.

<sup>57</sup>Gooch, G. P., *Studies in Modern History*, 327.

an intelligent expert, and urged that Britain should by all means unite with Russia in the settlement of the Eastern Question, instead of opposing her.<sup>58</sup> Leonard Courtney with equal conciseness and clarity denounced the policy of the government and held it responsible for destroying the Concert of Europe. "Laggard in thought and feeble in resolution," he wrote, "we destroyed the force of the European Concert, encouraged the Porte, even when attenuated below the tolerance of the German Chancellor."<sup>59</sup>

In a country such as England where, we are told<sup>60</sup> "public opinion . . . does succeed slowly in moulding its institutions in its own image," there were other agencies that helped to shape public opinion, besides the government. Next to the eminently "practical" men there was the "sentimental"<sup>61</sup> professoriate, and perhaps some editors, also of the "sentimental" category. Here Freeman, Goldwin Smith, and John Morley might justly claim quite extended discussion, but a few paragraphs will convey their views.

Morley as the editor of the *Fortnightly Review* had a strong following, and of course his opposition to the government was heartily supported by his followers. According to him the Turkish government was an "Asiatic despotism, mitigated by the control of ambassadors,"<sup>62</sup> and his strictures on English policy were justly severe. The Foreign Office was "quite willing to administer sermons or homilies to the Porte, but would take no step that might lead to a practical application of its precepts."<sup>63</sup> That policy was an "undignified see-saw,"<sup>64</sup> carried on in ambiguous despatches. "Now a second mission of the Fleet to Besika Bay, then a speech or a strong note for strict neutrality and non-interference. Now a violent despatch for Mr. Layard, then a pacific rebuke to a warlike deputation by Lord Derby. A paragraph pointing to war in the afternoon, speeches confident of peace in the evening. Who can wonder if out of these troubled waters of confusion, the bewildered men at the Porte made sure that something good would flow in their direction?"<sup>65</sup>

Freeman and Goldwin Smith were equally severe and extremely bitter in their denunciation of the government. The former (no less than the latter) thought that "for the sake of her supposed interests and on no other pretext, England had doomed struggling nations of the Ottoman

<sup>58</sup>"Russia," *Nineteenth Century*, I (March, April, 1878), 72-96 and 298-314.

<sup>59</sup>*Fortnightly Review*, XXVII (May, 1877), 624.

<sup>60</sup>Elliott, W. Y., *Pragmatic Revolt in Politics*, 249-50.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.* Freeman's articles, "Sentimental and Practical Politics," *Princeton Review*, Ser. IV, vol. III (March, 1879), 311-44, and "Three Treaties," *British Quarterly Review*, LXVII (Oct., 1878), 243-66.

<sup>62</sup>*Fortnightly Review*, XXVII (Feb., 1877), 279.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, XXIX (Feb., 1878), 304.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*



Empire to abide by their bondage."<sup>66</sup> "The 'honour' of a nation, as that phrase is used in many places," he wrote, "seems to have nothing whatever to do with the rules of right dealing."<sup>67</sup> Goldwin Smith, sheltered under the professor's cloak at Cornell, let loose a barrage of criticism that adumbrated the views of the Liberal leaders. According to him the English government was supporting the reactionary forces in an age of progress; it was entirely unbecoming for the government of a liberty-loving people to uphold the defunct Empire of a despotic ruler over against the liberating hands of Russia. In his article "The Slave-owner and the Turk"<sup>68</sup> he compared the Turk to the Southern slave-holder who fought against the progressive liberal ideas of the North, while Russia, coming from the same direction, was the upholder of such ideas. "The Liberals," he said, "are on the Russian side simply because, all things considered, . . . they happen to be convinced that the cause of humanity, which has sometimes to put up with rather questionable quarters, is in the present occasion in the camp of the Czar."<sup>69</sup> "The union of the Tory party with its clerical allies and its residuum of the Vatican and the synagogue in support of Islam," he wrote, "is clear indication that Russia, her autocracy notwithstanding, is in this war practically the champion of progress. . . . A victory gained over such a confederacy must be a victory of progress even though it be gained under the flag of the Czar."<sup>70</sup> He added that while for India England was "the land of liberators and philanthropists, she has shut upon the Christian communities of Eastern Europe the gate of their cruel and loathsome prison-house."<sup>71</sup> Russia, he thought, was demanding justice for these Christian communities; she "had clearly right on her side—treaty right and right which was above treaty."<sup>72</sup> True enough, her motives were mixed, "but so are the motives of anybody and everybody, and she was liable to uncharitable judgment accordingly."<sup>73</sup>

Such was the righteous indignation with which these men were burning; they stated the case of the oppressed non-Mohammedan subjects of the Porte with ineluctable logic. But what of that logic, since it had no place in this "practical" world and least of all in the diplomacy of an imperial power whose foreign policy has followed the dictates of empiri-

<sup>66</sup>Stephens, W. R. W., *The Life and Letters of Edward A. Freeman*, II, 106.

<sup>67</sup>*Princeton Review*, ser. IV, vol. II, 641.

<sup>68</sup>*Contemporary Review*, XXX (Nov., 1877), 1055-69.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 1056.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, 1088. "Liberty is a thing so holy and sweet," said Prevost-Paradol (quoted in B. Croce, *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, 241), "that we should take it no matter what hand offers it; happy if we can receive it from a Washington, but glad to accept it even if it comes from a Stuart or actually from a Cromwell."

<sup>71</sup>*Fortnightly Review*, XXIX (May, 1878), 652.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, 655.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*

cism?"<sup>74</sup> And if it had little or no place in diplomacy, it was of "still less use in influencing public opinion."<sup>75</sup>

Beaconsfield's ministry—that is, himself practically alone most of the time—was adamant against all this barrage of criticism and remained unshaken in its determination to support the "Sick Man."<sup>76</sup> The political excitement reached its climax in January, and the "light-hearted Jingo, . . . proclaimed their readiness to fight any possible adversary."<sup>77</sup> From then on they rang out the war cry:

We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do,  
We've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the money too.<sup>78</sup>

Derby and Carnarvon sent in their resignation on January 24, as a result of the government's decision to order the Fleet to Constantinople and to ask for a vote of credit of 6,000,000 pounds sterling.<sup>79</sup> And while the English were thus blowing hot and cold the Russians hurried the negotiations, and the treaty of peace was signed at San Stefano on February 19/March 3.

It was this treaty that became the target of the English—and of the English alone, since the diplomats of other countries (except Andrassy) were more or less satisfied with it. Though it was regarded by Andrassy as an "Orthodox Slavic sermon,"<sup>80</sup> yet in reality it was no more orthodox than the great many other diplomatic incongruities. Its only "serious vice," as one writer<sup>81</sup> put it some fifty years later, "was that it violated, without the consent of Europe, the settlement of 1856. In other respects it satisfied, well enough, the ideas of the modern world far better, in fact, than the Treaty of Berlin, . . . ." But whether it was the best to be had or the most desirable made not a whit of difference to the English Cabinet. That Cabinet had determined that there should be no such treaty because, it was thought, its terms endangered the safety of British interests; this in reality meant (as was actually borne out by events) that the English wanted to be compensated for their "neutrality." Heaven and earth must be stirred for Russia's failure to play this game of *quid pro quo* according to the rules. What did it matter if in the subsequent settlements nearly half of Bulgaria and its population was to be thrown once more into the Mezentian bondage? What did it matter if the reforms promised for the Armenian provinces were not carried out at all, as long as the English

<sup>74</sup>Chamberlain, Sir A., "The Permanent Bases of British Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, IX (July, 1931), 531-46.

<sup>75</sup>Newton, *op. cit.*, II, 141-2.

<sup>76</sup>*Punch* (vol. 73, Dec. 22, 1877), "that unrivalled mirror of average public opinion," showed the English support of the "Sick Man" in a cartoon entitled "Gathering of the Eagles" in which Turkey laid prostrate at the feet of the Bear while eagles (Germany, Austria, Serbia, and others) were ready to devour her.

<sup>77</sup>Newton, *op. cit.*, II, 123.

<sup>78</sup>Quoted in Langer, W. L., *European Alliances and Alignments*, 135.

<sup>79</sup>As the order of the Fleet was countermanded after 24 hours Derby withdrew his resignation but Carnarvon's was final. Early in February again the Fleet was ordered only to be countermanded once more, and finally another order was given on the 14th and on the following day the ironclads anchored before the Golden Horn. *Vid.* Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 198.

<sup>80</sup>Langer, *op. cit.*, 133.

<sup>81</sup>Cecil, A., *British Foreign Secretaries*, 297.

secured Cyprus as a naval base and the dream of their romantic statesmen, given to the world some thirty years earlier,<sup>82</sup> had come true?

By the time this *quid pro quo* was secured the statesmen of Europe were in a very excited temper. It was the most dangerous game that the English nation would have cared to play;<sup>83</sup> for, as has been said, it was "feared that the actor might get so absorbed in his part as to lose touch with mundane reality."<sup>84</sup> The British Fleet lay at anchor only a few miles away from the spot just outside of Constantinople, where the Russian army had taken its position. This was a sufficiently startling spectacle to unnerve anyone except perhaps the Iron Chancellor who, in his witty manner remarked that the fight, if ever begun, would be one "between an elephant and a whale." All the while the English lion roared loudly and worked covertly, the slow-going Russian bear braced its limbs and refused to yield. Such was the state of tension for several weeks.

After the signature of the treaty of peace the other Powers were not notified until the ratifications were exchanged, and the Foreign Office did not receive a copy of it until the 23rd of March. It was, however, generally taken for granted that England would not sanction the terms of the treaty and would, in all probability, ask for a general European conference where the treaty would be discussed. The English government knew that Russia would not, in any case, welcome such a move. For this reason at the historic Cabinet meeting of March 27, Beaconsfield "proposed to issue a proclamation declaring emergency, to put a force in the field, and simultaneously to send an expedition from India to occupy Cyprus and Scanderoon,"<sup>85</sup> in order to neutralize the Russian conquests of Armenia. This proposition was not solidly backed by the Foreign Office until Salisbury stepped into Derby's shoes on March 31 upon the latter's resignation. Nor was the English official position set forth definitely until Salisbury's assumption of his new duties at the Foreign Office. And this he tried to do in a dramatic manner.

Twenty-four hours after he succeeded Derby he had prepared his famous Circular which was ready to be let loose upon an expectant world on All Fools Day.<sup>86</sup> As a literary masterpiece the Circular is in a class by itself; as an oration, it is superb; as a threat to subdue an exhausted adversary, hardly anything could have been better. But as an arrogant piece of political speech its distinctive characteristic is oratory rather than logic. It was designed to bully an adversary to "introduce the element of

<sup>82</sup>In his novel *Tancred* (first published in 1847), Disraeli had written (Book IV, chapter I, 212-3, 1853 ed.): "... the English want Cyprus, and they will take it as compensation. If it is an affair of malice prepense, there will be war, for the laws of England require war if blood royal be spilled . . ."

<sup>83</sup>It is not as yet altogether agreed upon whether Disraeli meant to have war or not. Cf. Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 216-22, 397.

<sup>84</sup>Wingfield-Stratford, *op. cit.*, 143.

<sup>85</sup>Quoted from Derby's memoirs in Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 266.

<sup>86</sup>For the Circular *vid.* Hertslet, *op. cit.*, IV, 2698-2717. Cf. also Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 379-83.

counterpoise by obtaining for England a concession of competing authority from the Sultan."<sup>87</sup> Viewed from this angle—and from this angle alone—it may be regarded as a sort of Magna Carta for the Foreign Office. In it Salisbury denounced the Treaty of San Stefano *seriatim*, and insisted that it must be submitted to a European conference. But, as Gorchakov's reply to the Circular pointed out, it had no positive and meritorious features. "We duly recognize," said he in his reply of April 9, "the frankness with which it sets forth the views of the Government. We found the objections of the English Cabinet there set forth in great detail, but we have looked in vain for any proposals which it would be disposed to suggest towards a practical solution of the present crisis in the East."<sup>88</sup> But it was not deemed easy to suggest a "practical solution" without resorting to secret diplomacy and back-stage negotiations. These negotiations are of such importance for the subsequent settlements arrived at in Berlin that they will be dealt with in the next chapter.

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<sup>87</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 239. It has been stated that while Russia had spent thousands of lives and millions of pounds for her acquisitions in the Balkans Austria spent only ink and paper." (Temperley, H., *History of Serbia*, 271.) England was out to imitate Austria and in this she succeeded admirably.

<sup>88</sup>Gorchakov's reply is found in *Turkey* No. 27 (1878), 7-9.

## CHAPTER V

### SECRET DIPLOMACY, THE CONGRESS, AND THE ARMENIANS

This achievement of Beaconsfield and Salisbury will be looked upon as a masterpiece of diplomacy for all time.—ALFRED F. PRIEBRAM, 1929.

The peace of honour, which Beaconsfield on his return announced at Charing Cross to an admiring crowd, had virtually been secured at Downing Street before the beginning of the Congress.

—G. P. GOOCH, 1922.

The upshot of the Salisbury Circular and its repercussions was that finally Russia consented to submit the Treaty of San Stefano to a European congress. And the time between the date of the issuance of the Circular and the meeting of that Congress at Berlin was spent in diplomatic haggling and bargainings. "The practice of secret diplomacy," wrote Dawson,<sup>1</sup> "never exercised the Chanceries of Europe more assiduously than during the few weeks immediately preceding the Berlin Congress." The Anglo-Russian Agreement of May 30, the Anglo-Turkish Convention of June 4, and the Anglo-Austrian Agreement of June 6 were the fruits which English diplomacy gathered during this intervening period. And the manner in which these negotiations were carried on, not to say the matters with which they dealt, especially with regard to the Cyprus Convention, would make the "secret and mysterious" negotiations of San Stefano seem mere sporting games. The Anglo-Russian Memorandum and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, or the Cyprus Convention, as it is known, are directly concerned with the Armenian Question; these will now be examined in some detail.

By the terms of this Memorandum<sup>2</sup> of May 30 Russia came to a definite understanding concerning the important controversial points, and differences of points of view were fairly well composed. Russia, among other concessions she made in this Memorandum, gave up her single-handed and self-assumed obligation in Armenia and was willing to allow England to have a voice in the matter. "The provisions respecting Armenia stipulated in the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano must not be made exclusively to Russia but to England also."<sup>3</sup> This was the wording of part number 7 of this Memorandum. Thus not by the Cyprus Con-

<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, III, 134.

<sup>2</sup>The Memorandum was never intended for publication, and it is not printed in any official publication of the Government. But 24 hours after its signature it was "stolen" from the Foreign Office by a copying-clerk and printed in the *Globe* for May 31. For the text *vid.* Thompson, G. C., *Public Opinion and Lord Beaconsfield, 1875-1880*, II, 256-9.

<sup>3</sup>Thompson, *op. cit.*, II, 457. The French text reads (Martens, G. F. de, *Nouveau Recueil Général*, Ser. II, vol. III, 269-72): "Les promesses pour L'Arménie stipulées par le Traité Préliminaire de San Stefano ne doivent pas être faites exclusivement à la Russie mais à l'Angleterre aussi."

vention of June 4 (as is generally assumed) but by the specific terms of this Memorandum, England first assumed a half-share in the carrying out of Article 16 of that treaty, if it were to remain intact. And when this Article was transformed into Article 61, then the nature of the obligation did not change. "Thus the Armenians," wrote Rolin-Jacquemyns,<sup>4</sup> "to whom the clause applied, had thenceforward two protectors. Unfortunately they were two rival protectors." This was only the beginning—and only a chance beginning, one might say—for British diplomacy in its dealing with the Armenian Question and the fate of the Armenian people.<sup>5</sup> By the next move the Armenian Question was to become enmeshed and entangled with that diplomacy.

On June 4 England negotiated another convention which went far in advance in "burdening" her with obligations of introducing reforms in the Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman Empire. If by the Anglo-Russian Memorandum she was to share the responsibility of safeguarding the welfare of non-Mohammedans in these provinces, by the Cyprus Convention (and without the cognisance of Russia) she assumed the undivided responsibility.

By the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano, Russia acquired the Armenian districts of such importance as Kars, Ardahan, Olti, etc., besides the southeastern districts of Bayazid and Alashkerd. The English were quite alarmed over these arrangements. It was thought that Asiatic Turkey, and hence the "integrity and independence" of the Ottoman Empire, would be at the mercy of Russia. While the English were making every effort to recapture some of these territories for Turkey, at the same time they wanted to secure a naval base in the Mediterranean to serve in an eventual conflict with the Russians or other powers in that part of the world. For the securing of such a base, as well as for entering into a defensive alliance the Sultan was to be sounded. "I think," wrote Salisbury to Layard on May 2, "that we might very properly enter into a defensive alliance with the Porte, undertaking to join in defending her Asiatic Empire from any attacks of Russia. . . . But to give any strength or value to such an understanding, some port in the Levant would be an absolute necessity."<sup>6</sup> On May 9 he wrote that Great Britain was ready to give the Sultan the necessary "alliance of a great power."

<sup>4</sup>*Op. cit.*, 37. Cf. also Tcheraz, M., *What we gained from the Congress of Berlin?* (in Armenian), in which the author, one of the Armenian delegates at Berlin, expresses similar views.

<sup>5</sup>"Everything may be left in part to the hazard of adventure," said Emilio Castelar (*Nineteenth Century*, III, May, 1878, 580), "—everything except the fate of nations. Adventures in case of nations usually end as the adventures do in the immortal work of our own Cervantes, in great catastrophes."

<sup>6</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 266-7. The correspondence leading to the conclusion of this Convention has never been fully published, according to Headlam-Morley (*Studies in Diplomatic History*, 194). After the Congress of Berlin only a few despatches were published with the text of the Convention in *Turkey* No. 36 (1878). Cf. also Lee, *op. cit.*, 77-87; Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 421-30; Temperley, "Disraeli and Cyprus," and "Further Evidence on Disraeli and Cyprus," *English Historical Review*, XLVI (Apr., July, 1931). 274-9 and 457-60 respectively.

Then he went on to state the case of his country and the impropriety of Russia's possessing the Asiatic provinces. "There can be no question of autonomy of young and struggling nationalities and the rest of it. The direct government of Russia is pleasant for nobody; but to Christians of a different rite it is the most oppressive conceivable. . . . The Turkish Government is congenial, and as good as any other Mohammedans get except our own."<sup>7</sup> But Layard did not need any such sermons. What he wanted were express instructions and with these he was supplied.

An alliance with the Porte was thus deemed desirable. The Porte might have it only upon two conditions, namely: "We must not be hampered by divisions at home, and we must have every facility for exercising vigilance and giving assistance in Asia."<sup>8</sup> To meet the first of these conditions it was thought "necessary that the Porte should give us specific assurances of good government to Asiatic Christians, . . . and should thereby invest us with a special privilege of advice and remonstrance in case of any gross abuse. To meet the second, the Porte should concede to us the occupation of Cyprus."<sup>9</sup>

On May 23 Salisbury telegraphed to Layard: "Propose most secretly to Sultan following defensive alliance, to secure his territory for the future in Asia, . . ."<sup>10</sup> (Then follow the terms as stated in his earlier despatch.) England was to join with the Sultan in defending his Asiatic territories by force of arms:

In return, Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms (to be agreed upon later between the two powers) into the government of Christian subjects of the Porte in Armenia; and, in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagement, Sultan further consents to assign the Island of Cyprus, to be occupied and administered by England. . . . This alliance will be conditional on Russia's retaining Kars and her conquests in Armenia.

The ambassador was asked to press for "an immediate acceptance of these terms," and a reply must be had within 48 hours. The Sultan was given to understand that "the present opportunity, if neglected, will never recur." If his consent could not be had, then "negotiations will be broken off at once, and the capture of Constantinople and the partition of the Empire will be the immediate result."<sup>11</sup> Any statement concerning any of these passages thus quoted would be superfluous; they are as clear in meaning as in the language.

The Sultan consented to these terms on May 25. Salisbury was much pleased with the success of his work, and on May 30, in a lengthy despatch, instructed Layard that he should at once proceed to conclude the desired agreement. In this despatch he again briefly stated that Her

<sup>7</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 268-9.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 269.

<sup>10</sup>Headlam-Morley, *op. cit.*, 199-200.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 199.

Majesty's Government "Must be formally assured of the intention of the Porte to introduce the necessary reforms into the government of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte," though it was not deemed "desirable to require more than an engagement in general terms,"<sup>12</sup> the details being left for later arrangement. Certain of these details were arranged within the next few days and the agreement entitled "The Convention of Defensive Alliance between Great Britain and Turkey" was signed between Safvet Pasha, the Grand Vizir, and Layard.<sup>13</sup> Thus within less than a week after the Anglo-Russian Memorandum was signed there was now the Anglo-Turkish Convention. A "new Gibraltar" was added to the British Empire and Disraeli's dream came true.

Such are the characteristics of this "Casse-cou politique," as Carnarvon called it.<sup>14</sup> In this connection the importance of the passages quoted above is that at the very inception of the negotiations the matter of reforms and good government for the Asiatic Christians (of the Porte) are as twin brothers with the defence of the Porte against Russia, and Cyprus comes in as a naval base through which that defence was to be maintained. At times it has been maintained that the occupation of Cyprus is set off against the cession of Batoum, Kars, and Ardahan to Russia, and the introduction of reforms is made a condition of defending Asiatic Turkey against Russia's encroachment. But that is not what the wording of these despatches and the clauses of the Convention imply; Cyprus and the defence may be set off against reforms and good government since Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum were already conceded to Russia in the Memorandum of May 30. Viewed in this light it is not possible to exaggerate the responsibility which England undertook in a seemingly light-hearted manner. As Stratford de Redcliffe stated,<sup>15</sup> by that Convention England "incurred a more than common amount of responsibility, . . . fraught to all appearances with onerous obligations, unavoidable difficulties, embarrassing hazards and uncertain success, . . ." England was thus "committed to the responsibility of defending Turkey and regenerating Asia Minor."<sup>16</sup> Or, as another writer of that time put it, "The English were dealing with a blind man, not by restoring his sight, but by accepting the proud *role* of the dog that leads him and snaps at people who would molest him."<sup>17</sup>

The Cyprus Convention was the second of the trilogy which is called by Professor Pribram "a masterpiece of all time." The third, the Anglo-Austrian Agreement, was to follow this Convention within two days.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Headlam-Morley, *op. cit.*, 209.

<sup>13</sup>For the text, *vid.*, *British and Foreign State Papers*, LXIX (1877-1878), 744-8.

<sup>14</sup>Quoted in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, III, 4, from Carnarvon's memoirs of July 5, 1878.

<sup>15</sup>*The Eastern Question*, 48.

<sup>16</sup>Laing, S., *Fortnightly Review*, XXX (Aug., 1878), 169.

<sup>17</sup>Forbes, A., *Nineteenth Century*, IV (Oct., 1878), 611.

<sup>18</sup>For this Agreement *vid.* Larmeroux, J., *La Politique extérieure de l'Autriche-Hongrie*, I, 67-92, and Langer, *op. cit.*, 148-50.



Then the First Lord of the Treasury of Her Majesty's Government and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, armed with these secret understandings, would take the road that leads to Berlin, where "Everybody's Friend, the Honest Broker," was waiting for the assemblage of his "Concert."<sup>19</sup> Besides those who arrived in Berlin, armed with secret documents, there were the representatives of a people whose fate was sealed by the Cyprus Convention—the Armenian delegates. Now we will, in this narrative, return to Constantinople and follow the footsteps of these delegates thence to Berlin.

When it became obvious, soon after its signature, that the Treaty of San Stefano had to undergo some changes, the Armenians thought that thus they might secure better terms than were given them by Article 16 of that treaty. At once "A Project of Laws for Turkish Armenia"<sup>20</sup> was prepared by the Patriarchate which, with a "Memorandum on the Armenian Question,"<sup>21</sup> was to be presented to the chancellories of the several powers and to the ensuing Areopagus at Berlin.

The "Project" contained the reforms desired by the Armenians in the Armenian provinces, namely: the appointment of an Armenian as Governor-General over these provinces, reforms in the matters of taxation, in the judicial system, the organization of local militia composed of Christians and Mohammedans (exclusive of the Kurds and Circassians), religious freedom, the establishment of local assemblies, and the appointment of an international commission by the Powers to supervise the execution of these reforms.<sup>22</sup> The purport of the "Memorandum" was to justify the proposed reforms in the "Project." Therein it was stated that all efforts at reforms for Asiatic Turkey have thus far failed without foreign supervision. The Armenians did not arrogate to themselves any political ambition,<sup>23</sup> but what they asked for was to have a self-governing Christian organization in Turkish Armenia, with the same guarantees as those given to Lebanon by the Powers.<sup>24</sup>

Along with this "Project" and "Memorandum" a set of statistical abstracts, showing the number of the Armenians in the six Armenian provinces and in the rest of the Ottoman Empire, was prepared to be presented to the Congress. According to these figures there were then 3,000,000 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. This probably exagger-

<sup>19</sup>*Punch* (vol. 74, July 6, 1878) shows Beaconsfield and Bismarck, "to alternate the duties of Conductor and First-Fiddle; Salisbury for Beaconsfield's Second Fiddle; Schouvalov, Big-Drum and Leader of the Russian Horn Band; Andrassy, Ophicleide; Waddington, Flute and French *cor de Chasse*; Corti, *Viol da Gamba*; Mehemet, Cymbals, Tambourine, and Turkish Crescent; Roumanian *Gusla*, Greek *Lyre*, Jew's-harp, and other minor instruments. . . ."

<sup>20</sup>"Project de réglemant pour l'Arménie turque." The French text of this brief project is in Léart, M., *La Question Arménienne*, 28-30; the Armenian text is in Leo, *op. cit.*, 63-9.

<sup>21</sup>A part of this "Memorandum" is in Jonquière, *op. cit.*, II, 123-6.

<sup>22</sup>Leo, *op. cit.*, 63-9.

<sup>23</sup>"Ils sont loin de se livrer aux idées d'ambition politique. Ce qu'ils demandent c'est d'avoir dans l'Arménie turque une organisation chrétienne autonome, entourée des mêmes garanties que celle du Liban; . . . ." Quoted in Jonquière, *op. cit.*, II, 126.

<sup>24</sup>A program of reforms, containing the substance of this "Project" was presented to the Porte at the time of the San Stefano negotiations, but the Grand Vizir, stating that he was too busy, ignored it and paid no attention to its contents. *Vid.* Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 350.

ated number was obtained by taking the number 2,400,000 given by Ubicini<sup>25</sup> for the year 1845 and then adding to it a 20 per cent increase since that year.<sup>26</sup> Of this 3,000,000, it was stated, 400,000 live in European Turkey; 1,330,000 in the six Armenian provinces, and the remaining 1,270,000 in the other parts of the Empire. These statistics were not of the kind, it then seemed, to be relied upon; and it is likely that the statesmen gathered at the Congress paid little attention and attached little importance to them. As we shall go into these matters in connection with the proposed reforms, it is not necessary to examine them now; it is more important to follow their course to Berlin.

The delegates made an Odyssey that took them to Rome, Paris, London, and Berlin; they thought they would profit through interviews in these capitals.<sup>27</sup> On March 15/27 they were at Rome and had an interview with the Foreign Minister Corti. He was given a copy of the "Project" and promised that he would support the Armenian cause at the Congress.<sup>28</sup> On March 19/31 they arrived in Paris and first conferred with Nubar Pasha, the Armenian statesman of Egypt. The veteran statesman told them that Russia and England would not welcome the idea of autonomy or local self-government for the Armenian provinces. The delegates were chagrined because their hopes were thus dashed to the ground by the leading contemporary Armenian statesman. They then asked him what he would suggest; he offered his suggestions, which were later printed and sent to the plenipotentiaries at Berlin, under the title "A few Notes Concerning the Reforms to be Introduced in the Administration of Armenia."<sup>29</sup> In these suggestions the matter of autonomy found no place. Later the delegates saw Waddington, the French Foreign Minister, and he assured them as Corti had done. "You can be certain," he is reported to have said,<sup>30</sup> "that France is not indifferent to the conditions in Armenia." He did not, however, think that the Congress would grant the Armenians autonomy or local self-government. "The men at the Congress," he said, "are cold-hearted, and will not be satisfied with platonic documents."<sup>31</sup> They then made their round of calls on the English, German, and Austrian ambassadors and were ready to cross the Channel.

On April 11/24 they arrived at London and were to remain in England until the first week of June. During all this time, however, in spite

<sup>25</sup>Ubicini, *Letters*, II, 299.

<sup>26</sup>This manner of obtaining the number 3,000,000 was deemed justifiable because in the corresponding period the population of Egypt, Serbia, Roumania, and of the other parts of the Empire had shown an increase of 20-25 per cent. *Vid.* Leo, *op. cit.*, 84.

<sup>27</sup>The delegates were: ex-Patriarch Khrimian, Mr. M. Tcheraz, Bishop Narbey, and Mr. S. Papazian.

<sup>28</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 368; Tcheraz, M., *Armenia and Italy* (in Armenian), 40-41.

<sup>29</sup>An English translation of these "Notes" is printed, with explanations, by E. Dickey in the *Nineteenth Century*, IV (Sept. 1878), 548-59.

<sup>30</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 371.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 372.

of their repeated efforts they were unable to register much success, since Beaconsfield and Salisbury were not disposed to consider their cause in a deserving and sympathetic spirit. The coldest of the "cold-hearted men" were then running the government of a liberty-loving people. There the delegates were to cool their heels in the ante-chambers of 10 Downing Street in their effort to have an interview with Beaconsfield, an interview which was not granted. They waited upon Salisbury and finally had an interview with him (on May 10), but the effusive Foreign Secretary sent them away with pious and hopeful expressions. "You can be confident," he is reported to have said, "that the Armenians will have a good administration which will safeguard their well-being, liberty and peace."<sup>82</sup>

Then the delegates made their round among men who were not of the cold-hearted type and of whom England had more than her share. There were Gladstone and Forster, the Dukes of Argyll and Shaftesbury, Carnarvon, Grant Duff, and John Morley, and of course the then young James Bryce of *Holy Roman Empire* fame, who from then on came to be known as "the member for Armenia in the British House of Commons."<sup>83</sup> And these men kept the cause of the Armenian people before the English public. "In the pressure of the changes," wrote the *Times* of March 18, "the Armenian nation is not going to remain a simple spectator, . . . It will address itself to the Congress and plead its cause, soliciting the same conditions as apply to other Christian populations." And this came from the supposedly semi-official paper.<sup>84</sup> A few days later to that paper Bryce addressed a letter in which he stated that it was high time for the Armenians to bring their case before the Congress; "and that conditions and claims of the Armenian people should receive more attention in England than they have yet attained. . . . The Armenians have as much claim as any other section of the Christian subjects of the Porte to the sympathy and help of Europe. . . . Apart from all questions of humanity it is to the clearest interest of England to recognize and support their claims."<sup>85</sup> But the clipping language of this indefatigable champion of a lost cause and the sad fate of a people for whom he spoke some forty years later at the Peace Conference of Paris could not help the Armenian cause. He might appeal for this cause to the sympathy of Europe, but inanimate Europe was ruled by "cold-hearted" men without much human sympathy.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, 384-5.

<sup>83</sup>Fisher, H. A. L., *James Bryce*, I, 183.

<sup>84</sup>"That the *Times* always expresses the policy of the Foreign Office is as untrue," wrote Gooch (*Studies in Modern History*, 346), "as that it has never been employed for official purposes."

<sup>85</sup>*Times*, March 20.

<sup>86</sup>Besides the press, which had occasionally called the attention of its readers to the Armenian cause, pamphlets and books were issued in which the conditions prevalent in Armenia were graphically described. In 1877 the Patriarchate issued the *Rapports sur l'oppression des Arméniens en Arménie*, printed in London and distributed throughout England. In the same year another pamphlet, *Les Arméniens et Turquie*, was issued, being the petition which the Patriarch presented to the Porte in the previous year. At this same time the Eastern Question

Then the delegates made their visits to the diplomatic circles, in the course of which the German Ambassador Count Münster told them that they would find the fulfilment of their hopes in Berlin where "Bismarck was laboring to free the suppressed Christians from the Ottoman yoke." On June 8 they left England and at the opening of the Congress (June 13) they were in Berlin.<sup>37</sup>

"It is for the purpose of submitting the work of San Stefano to the free discussion of the signatory governments of the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 that we find ourselves assembled."<sup>38</sup> These were the words with which the Iron Chancellor opened the Congress on June 13. Then the work proceeded with mechanical precision; every important issue was first agreed upon in conferences and then formally settled in the sessions of the Congress.<sup>39</sup> It was in his capacity as a most consummate presiding officer that Bismarck deserves unqualified praise but not as an "honest broker." He was equally severe in bullying the Turkish plenipotentiaries as he was in reminding Salisbury that a question should not be repeated.<sup>40</sup>

The Armenian delegates were of course not admitted into the sessions of the Congress, but they tried to get in touch with the chief plenipotentiaries of the Powers with a view to winning their sympathy and support for the Armenian cause. First they tried to have an interview with Bismarck through the Bismarckian Boswell, Dr. Moritz Busch. That was not to be had. They then resorted to the man whom they considered as their most useful friend, and the chief French plenipotentiary proved himself serviceable in more than one way.<sup>41</sup> It was through his sugges-

Association was founded, whose aim was to "study the conditions of Christians in the Near East and propose means to improve their lot." In 1877 this Association issued a pamphlet, *Armenia and Lebanon* (prepared by J. W. Probyn and published by Cassell, Peter, and Galpin), in which the granting of autonomy to Armenia similar to that of Lebanon was urged. In March of the same year Bryce spoke at a meeting of the Royal Institution of Great Britain on "Armenia and Ararat." A year later (March, 1878) through his efforts the Anglo-Armenian Association was founded, of which he became the honorary secretary with Lord Carnarvon as its honorary president. At the very same time a group of Armenians had issued another pamphlet, *The Conference and the Armenians* (referring to the Congress of Berlin). Cf. also Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 375-8.

<sup>37</sup>Of course before leaving England they had the chance to see the Grand Old Man and Mr. Forster. The first of these expressed his heartfelt sympathy for the Armenians but also confessed his impotence. Forster was extremely candid in his interview. "Do not," he said, "estrangle yourselves from Russia. Do not be the tool in the hands of the Conservative or the Liberal Party; do not depend upon England." Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 391.

<sup>38</sup>"C'est pour soumettre l'oeuvre de San Stefano a la libre discussions des cabinets signataires des traités de 1856 et de 1871 que nous trouvons reunis." From the Protocol, *British and Foreign State Papers*, LXXIX (1877-1878), 886.

<sup>39</sup>The printed protocols of course have the minutes of the formal sessions and not those of the conferences. Even these protocols, as Hanotaux states with frankness, "contain a very incomplete picture of the sessions." *Vid. Revue des Deux Mondes*, Ser. V, Vol. 47 (Oct., 1908), 482.

<sup>40</sup>Salisbury had requested for the second time [on July 5, according to Hohenlohe, *Memoirs*, II, 227] that a day might be arranged for what he called the Armenian Question. "Another one!" exclaimed Bismarck loudly, apparently impatient." *Vid.* also Caratheodory Pasha, *Le Rapport Secret sur le Congrès de Berlin*, edited by B. Bareilles, 71.

<sup>41</sup>The delegates, of course, tried to have an interview with Beaconsfield, and finally one was arranged through Melkon Khan, the Persian Ambassador at London (an Armenian) who was attending the Congress, but the condition upon which such an interview was granted clearly proved that "one of the most humane and tender-hearted of men" (Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 44) displayed little human sympathy. He demanded that during the interview politics or matters affecting politics should not be discussed, thus giving him time to make his pleasant observations and comments upon the similarity of the clothes worn by the Armenian Archbishops to those worn by the monks at the monastery of Mt. Athos.

tion that they sent (on June 25) copies of the "Project" and the "Memorandum" to all the chief delegates of the Powers, and it was he who almost constantly kept the Armenians informed as to the time when their case might be considered by the Congress.<sup>42</sup> It was also upon his suggestion that the Armenians addressed a note to Bismarck requesting him to place the Armenian Question on the Agenda of the Congress.<sup>43</sup>

Finally on July 4, in the twelfth session of the Congress, "Lord Salisbury proposed that Article 16 of the Treaty pertaining to Armenia be taken up. He added that he was ready to accept the last three lines of the Article" which dealt with the proposed reforms, if the Congress agreed to drop the first three lines which stipulated that Russian troops occupying the Armenian territories of the Porte should not evacuate until the introduction of the promised reforms. What His Lordship meant, in so many words, was that the promises of His Majesty the Sultan be taken at their face value. Thus the man who had written from the Constantinople Conference that the Porte was not so much against "the proposals of reforms as to entering into an engagement to carry them out"<sup>44</sup> did not now seem to care whether these promises were carried out or not. Perhaps he thought that England was able to compel the Porte to make good his promises through the Cyprus Convention. If his suggestion was not acceptable, then he "would suggest ultimately another article for the Armenians."<sup>45</sup> Count Shouvalov reminded the Noble Marquis, there and then, that the withdrawal of the Russian forces from these territories would give rise to serious disturbances.<sup>46</sup> There was, however, no time for the discussion, and the matter was left for another session.

In the fourteenth session (July 6) Salisbury had already prepared a version of Article 16 suitable to his desires. This version omitted the first three lines of the original Article which read:

As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications, detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries. . . .

And then he added to the remainder of the Article the following:

She (the Porte) will come to an ulterior agreement with the six other Signatory Powers as to the scope of this engagement and the measures necessary to put it into execution."<sup>47</sup>

He then added that "The interest of the Armenians ought to be secured," for "the object of the proposal is to hold out to them hopes of immediate amelioration simultaneously with future progress."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>42</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 417-8.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 418.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid. ante*, p. 51.

<sup>45</sup>*Turkey*, No. 39 (1878), 186.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 187.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

Here one may interrupt the Noble Marquis with some unconventional questions. What was the object in trying to have all the other "Signatory Powers" share the responsibility which the British government had shouldered by the terms of the Cyprus Convention? Did Salisbury at this moment realize that his government was burdened with "a more than common amount of responsibility, . . . ." as the Great Elchi (Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) had said, or was this a way of stating that satisfactory portions of a secret Convention are valid and binding while the parts that impose "onerous obligations" could be disregarded? Whatever his intentions, his proposition was to receive support in some quarters because the secret Convention was not, as yet, made public, though it has been asserted<sup>49</sup> that Bismarck knew of it from the time of its negotiation.

Of course, the first to agree to such a proposal was the first Turkish plenipotentiary,<sup>50</sup> who admitted that during the last war "the unsubjected [*insoumisés*] tribes, had caused serious disorders," but now "the Porte had taken measures and put an end to them."<sup>51</sup> He then proposed the following addition to the proposal of Salisbury: "The Porte will communicate to the Six Powers the result of the measures which have already been taken in that respect."<sup>52</sup> Then the Congress once more postponed the matter for the next session.

Of the transactions in the sessions the Armenians knew nothing.<sup>53</sup> On that same day (July 6) they had an interview with Gorchakov. The Grand Old Man of Imperial Russia told them that all of their demands that were in consonance with the content of Article 16 would be specially supported by him. "But," he reminded them that their "demand of administrative autonomy cannot be supported by us in the same spirit, since it is not included in the instructions which I have from the Tsar. I can only promise what I am able to do. I do not wish to make fair promises and nothing more."<sup>54</sup> Though the Armenians were by this time convinced that Gorchakov was laboring for their welfare, and for which they expressed their gratitude, yet they were not entirely satisfied because he was not for their "Project" *in toto*.

Immediately after the above session Count Shouvalov sent for the Armenian delegates, and these presented themselves in all haste. He expressed to them his sincere regrets for the turn which affairs were taking. "This Congress," he said, "has no time to busy itself with your Question. Prince Bismarck, to conclude the work of the Congress, wants to have principles decided first, leaving details for some other time. I could argue

<sup>49</sup>Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, I, 88-92.

<sup>50</sup>No doubt the English and the Turkish delegates had conferred over this matter before making their proposals at the general session.

<sup>51</sup>*Turkey* No. 39 (1878), 210.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>All the sessions of the Congress were of course secret.

<sup>54</sup>"Je ne veux pas vous jeter de l'eau bénite de cour." Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 462. The Armenians were still in the dark about the Cyprus Convention.

for your Question; the Turks will oppose it; then discussions would follow, but Bismarck would not permit that."<sup>85</sup> He suggested that the matter of autonomy be dropped and that they should agree upon the following: "The Turkish government undertakes to introduce reforms in Armenia, through the aid of a European commission which will include Armenian members." But the Armenians would not readily agree to that until all was up. Finally Shouvalov promised to submit their request to the Congress and, if that was rejected, then he would submit his own suggestion.

At this juncture it is immaterial to inquire whether he again took the matter up in the Congress or not, for the printed protocols show nothing to indicate that he did. All we know is that in the fifteenth session (July 8) of the Congress the matter was smoothly decided. On July 7 French newspapers had printed the Cyprus Convention and on the following day it was announced in the Commons. This paralysed the little support that the Russians were giving to the Armenian cause and the following sessions were more concerned with general matters relating to the Asiatic provinces than with the sad fate of the Armenians.

In the fifteenth session Lord Salisbury communicated to the Congress the results of "an ulterior understanding with the Ottoman plenipotentiaries as to the wording of Article 16 concerning the Armenians," which he read as follows:

The Sublime Porte engages to realize, without further delay, the ameliorations and the reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and the Circassians. She will periodically render account of the measures taken with this intent to the Powers who will supervise them.<sup>86</sup>

At once the Congress gave its approval to this version. What took place between the British and Turkish delegates before they agreed upon the above version of Article 16 of the San Stefano Treaty, which became Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty, is not known. At Berlin the Armenians wanted something more than what was given to them in Article 16. Instead of getting something additional, they lost much of what they already had. In the Treaty of San Stefano the execution of the promised reforms in Armenia was tied up with the evacuation of these territories by the Russian soldiers. By the Treaty of Berlin this particular form of positive guarantee was thrown overboard and the statesmen assembled there were not disposed to exact any definite or positive guarantees from the Porte in any form.

With the advantage of hindsight one can look back to the history of

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<sup>85</sup>Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 468-9.

<sup>86</sup>*Turkey* No. 39 (1878), 225.

the last hundred years of the Christian subjects of the Porte and their relations with the Powers, and then explain the conduct of these Powers in their relation to the Armenian Question. As the Armenians had to be educated in the niceties of European diplomacy, so the diplomats of Europe had to educate themselves to the politics of the Porte. As it had taken about fifty years (from the Greek War of Independence to the 1870's) to find out what the Turkish rule meant to the Christian subjects in Europe and what the Turkish promises amounted to in regard to introducing reforms in that part of the Empire, so it was to take nearly as long a period of time before the same diplomats could bring themselves around to accept and believe the Porte's promises in regard to introducing similar reforms in its Asiatic provinces. The massacres of Chios, unending misrule, unbearable oppressions, and the massacres of Batak, finally and gradually were instrumental in delivering the Christian subjects of the Porte in Europe from its oppressive yoke. And the massacres of Alashkerd and Bayazid (1878), of Sassoun and Constantinople (1893-96), of Adana (1909), and those of the year 1915 perhaps would have delivered the Armenians from the grip of the same deadly hand.<sup>57</sup> Perhaps so, but it was not to be; for the simple reason that the men assembled at Berlin would not concern themselves with the fate of the Armenians. Instead, some of them would pocket a part of the Sultan's Empire and thus prolong the unbearable yoke of Abdul Hamid II over the territories which he held by right of conquest.<sup>58</sup>

A close study of the Armenian Question will perhaps show that most, if not all, of the succeeding calamities and tragedies may be traced back to the suppression of Article 16 of the San Stefano Treaty in favor of Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin. The failure of the Congress of Berlin to exact positive guarantee from the Porte paved the way for such deplorable events. It was not expected that the Sultan, with the watchword "To hurry is the work of the Devil, and to go slowly is the will of God," would willingly accept any binding obligation in order to preserve the life and safety of the non-Mohammedans in Asiatic Turkey. The only such

<sup>57</sup>Seton-Watson believes that "The gradual evolution of a saner British policy made further progress in the 'nineties, under the educative force of Armenian massacres." *Vid. Report of the Anglo-American Conference of Historians for 1936*, p. 108.

<sup>58</sup>This treaty has been alternately praised and condemned by diplomatic historians. Langer in his well-known work (*European Alliances and Alignments*, 165-6) writes: "The Berlin Treaty has been subjected to scathing and devastating criticism, and it has been all too frequently pointed out that its most important provisions were torn up in a very short time. With the advantage of hind-sight it is always easy for posterity to pick the flaws and defects in the works of statesmen of the past. But in justice to them one must view the situation as it presented itself in their own time. . . . To attribute these provisions to the blindness or ill will of the statesmen assembled at Berlin would, however, be puerile. They could hardly be expected to understand the working of the spirit of nationality in a region which was all but unknown. . . . In other words, the mistakes made by European statesmen were due to pardonable ignorance rather than to malice. . . . After all, an ideal territorial settlement is a chimera, and the Balkan settlement of the present day is in many ways not much better than that laid down in the Treaty of Berlin." It is extraordinary to have such a statement emanating from one who is a thorough-going revisionist.



guarantee that might have produced the desired results was the one which Russia held out. And the only one which the Congress was willing to give was a kind of square peg in a round hole—the collective guarantee.<sup>59</sup>

The disappointment and chagrin experienced by the Armenian delegates need not be described. Once more they felt like the sinking man clinging to a serpent and there was nothing more to do but to take the road back to Constantinople. Before taking leave they were instructed by the Patriarch to lodge a complaint with the chief plenipotentiary of each Power, which in part read:

The Armenian delegation will return to the East carrying with it the lesson that without struggle and without insurrection nothing can be obtained. Nevertheless the delegation will never cease addressing petitions (for justice and better treatment) until Europe has satisfied its just claims.<sup>60</sup>

It is one of the saddest ironies of fate among peoples and races that while many worthy and distinguished sons of this sorely tried people were almost at the very top of governments in other lands, they had to be manhandled and massacred in their homeland. Such men as Melkon Khan (the ambassador of Persia in London), Nubar Pasha (the gifted statesman and one of the founders of Modern Egypt), Loris Melikov (a brave soldier in the Tsar's army and perhaps the most influential statesman who advised Alexander II to issue a liberal constitution in 1881), Gregory Odian (the reputed co-author of the Turkish Constitution of 1876), and many others, when faced with the sufficiently difficult choice between a hazardous life at home and a thankless quest of unprofitable knowledge abroad, had forsaken their nativity. While they were all in the service of their adopted countries, their unfortunate kinsmen were being negligently treated by the statesmen of Europe. This irony indeed has some analogies. Like the "armies of the French Revolution" which could carry the seeds of liberty into nearly all other countries of Europe except to France (at the time), or like the Argentine troops, that "gave the gift

<sup>59</sup>Regarding the nature of these guarantees a contemporary commented as follows (Brunswick, B., *Traité de Berlin, Annoté et Commenté*, 209): "Ces articles sont, comme tous les autres, protégés par le droit des gens, et sans une stipulation *ad hoc*, chacune des parties contractantes posséderait le droit d'en poursuivre l'exécution, dans le cas le gouvernement de la Sublime Porte les violerait, droit auquel chacune donnerait le degré d'extension pratique, ou qu'elle négligerait complètement d'exercer, soient l'appréciation des intérêts à sauvegarder, des danger à courir pour atteindre ce but, et de avantages matériels ou moraux à obtenir. . . . Quant à la garantie collective au solidaire, elle est semblable à la Garantie séparée, quand il s'agit d'assurer l'exécution des clauses matérielles, comme l'évacuation territoriales, . . . aucun dissentiment ne pouvant naître entre les puissances garantes sur l'existence d'un manquement, évident au Traité. Elle est moins aisée à exercer quand il s'agit de clauses dont l'effet est moins frappant par son évidence; pour cette nature de stipulation, la Garantie collective cesse d'être une Garantie d'exécution, peut devenir un encouragement à la violation du Traité, et risque d'être une source de complications entre les contractants."

<sup>60</sup>The full text of this complaint is in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 479. Incidentally, in connection with this lesson which the Armenian delegation claimed to have learned at Berlin, it is appropriate to quote a part of the lesson that some Armenians thought the Powers had learned in the East exactly 46 years later. In 1924 when the Allied forces had finally withdrawn from Constantinople, the Armenian daily *Jagadamard* (Aug. 24) bade them farewell in reciting that lesson. "And now they go . . . They came full of arrogance and haughty in appearance; . . . They came in the name of justice and now they go, leaving behind them a thousand and one injustices. . . . They had come to teach a lesson to the backward East; they now go, after having learned the most bitter lesson from the East."

of liberty to Chili and Peru" but could not and would not (again at the time only) render the same services to their own country, so the Armenian statesmen and soldiers, though able to render unremitting services to other countries and to other peoples, could do nothing for their kinsmen in their native land.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>While the delegates were at Berlin they had the chance of conferring with Loris Melikov who at the time happened to be there. The general whose victories were to be turned into a Cadmean victory by British diplomacy, advised the delegates not to try to pin their hopes upon any single power but to try to enlist the sympathy and cordial support of all of them. *Vid.* Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 480 and note.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ROAD BACK: REFORMS, GUARANTEES, AND FAILURES

The Armenian massacres of the nineties, and the culminating tragedy of 1915, might have been avoided if Article LXI of the Treaty had been enforced.—R. W. SETON-WATSON, 1935.

Spirit of Chaos, now to thee I return.  
The choice before me lies of Death or Hell,—  
Death that leads on to sleep, or Hell that yields  
That riot of the blood my soul hath spurned.  
—GOETHE, *Faust*, Act I, Sc. 1.

"There is a European atmosphere. The same ideas are spread everywhere: they are all French and find naturally in France their most perfect expression." In these words a patriotic French scholar<sup>1</sup> described the permeation of the French Revolutionary ideas throughout Europe. If one is driven to state what ideas prevailed at the Berlin Congress and during the period immediately preceding and following it, one may with equal certainty and clarity reply: they were all English, and London was their native habitat. "The Peace with Honour" which a beaming Prime Minister claimed to have brought home from Berlin, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> was not the work of that Congress; it was the fruit of secret diplomacy. If England was able to secure "Peace with Honour," it was natural to expect that she would at least make an attempt to discharge honorably the obligations she had undertaken solemnly by the Treaty, and especially by the Cyprus Convention. It is with the fulfilment of the "onerous responsibilities" which she assumed by this Convention to introduce reforms into the Asiatic provinces of the Sultan that we are to deal, and to ascertain how these obligations, as concomitant parts of the "Peace with Honour," were evaded. To that subject most of this chapter will be devoted; but first a few paragraphs on the Armenians would seem to be in order.

On their way to Berlin the Armenian delegates were burdened with the responsibility of placing the Armenian case before the Powers. That was a mission not easily to be carried out, and its burden weighed heavily upon them; yet that weight was not felt so oppressively, since they possessed the hope of obtaining autonomy or local self-government for the Armenians residing in the Armenian provinces of Turkey. And the chances for attaining this loomed bright before these uninformed and uninitiated delegates who knew practically nothing of the niceties of secret

<sup>1</sup>Sorel, A., *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, I, 147 (1897 ed.). "Il y a une atmosphère européenne. Les mêmes idées sont répandues partout; elles sont toutes françaises, et trouvent naturellement en France leur plus parfaite expression."

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Pribram, A. F. (*England and the International Policy of European Great Powers*, 14) and herein given as a motto for Chapter V, p. 73.

diplomacy. The Anglo-Russian Memorandum of May 30 had been made public, but its implications were not duly appreciated by the Armenian delegates (no doubt partly because it was then disavowed by the British government), while the Cyprus Convention—the one *origo malorum*<sup>3</sup> of nearly all the Armenian tragedies—was still in the dark. With some prospects they had embarked upon their difficult mission, and none of them—indeed, not the least optimistic of the Armenians—would have thought that the fruits gathered at Berlin were to be so mortally poisonous as to condemn the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire to lasting misery and eventual perdition.

At Berlin they had to face the grim realities of many a diplomatic *fait accompli*, negotiated in the dark and sanctioned openly by the “practical” men of the world. That was sufficiently distressing. At San Stefano when they had failed to get, by Article 16, what they wanted, they were disappointed; but at Berlin when the Congress abrogated that Article and almost put an end to all the hopes they cherished, then they were in despair. In a most dispirited mood they left Berlin, heavily burdened with pressing disillusionments, regrets, and griefs. They must have felt like the young devotee who, having taken his orders and having begun his ministry, suddenly “discovered that his God had feet of clay and had sold out to the nearest tabernacle.” The gods of the suppressed non-Mohammedan subjects of the Porte—the “cold-hearted men” assembled at the Berlin Congress—had long since placed themselves in the market not for worthy causes but for those who would “deliver the goods.” True it is that not all the plenipotentiaries at the Congress were satisfied with the treaty, since “most of its signatories left the German capital smarting under a sense of disappointment or humiliation;”<sup>4</sup> yet none were so unjustly humiliated to a degree of mortification as were the Armenians. And if Beaconsfield had to justify his acts before the “mother of parliaments,” if Shouvalov had to atone for his compromising policy before his sovereign,<sup>5</sup> the Armenian delegates, and especially their moving spirit, the Patriarch<sup>6</sup> had to justify, before the National Assembly, the steps taken that led to such despairing results and brought the Armenian Question to such a bitter *impasse*.

<sup>3</sup>Seton-Watson's statement (*op. cit.*, 523) that “Cyprus was the sop to Cerberus,” though made in another connection, is quite appropriate.

<sup>4</sup>Gooch, G. P., *History of Modern Europe*, 1.

<sup>5</sup>Shouvalov told Salisbury on June 19, after the Russians had conceded the division of Bulgaria into two parts: “J'ai devant moi une tache bien autrement difficile,—me defendre dans une chambre.” Quoted in Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 285.

<sup>6</sup>During the Congress when the Sultan heard that the Patriarch had sent Armenian representatives to Berlin, he commanded that they be recalled at once. To this the Patriarch replied: “These delegates are sent by the Armenian communities and only the National Assembly could recall them. Besides,” he added, “if they do return, then I should be obliged to go instead.” Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 454. A second command from the Sultan brought a sharper reply. “Go and tell the Sultan,” the Patriarch is reported to have said to the Sultan's messenger, “that I myself sent these delegates to the Congress to secure remedies for the woes of my communities, and I will not recall them even if he means to hang me at the door of the Patriarchate, as the Greek Patriarch was hanged half a century ago.” Quoted in Tcheraz, M., *The Armenian Question* (in Armenian), 14.

During the entire month of the Berlin Congress<sup>7</sup> any discussion of the Question was avoided in the Assembly.<sup>8</sup> Once (on June 21) the Chairman mentioned the subject by way of remark that the Patriarch and his counsellors had spared no effort to place the case of the Armenian people before the Congress,<sup>9</sup> and it was again mentioned on July 5. On this latter occasion the Assembly expressed the hope that "the statesmen assembled at the Areopagus of Berlin in the name of Justice, God, and Peace,"<sup>10</sup> would also give satisfaction to the just claims of the Armenian people. That body had patiently and anxiously waited for the final outcome of the Congress and the return of the delegates. It was perhaps quite proper for the Assembly to express such pious hopes when a message from the delegates read that "Armenia is about to be born, though we do not know whether it will be a boy or a girl,"<sup>11</sup> just as it was justified in requesting the Patriarch to appear before it and give his report about the stillborn child.

On July 7/20 the Patriarch was asked to do this, but as he was not as yet prepared, the report was not rendered until August 4/17. But on that date when the members of the Assembly were ready to hear the recital of that report<sup>12</sup> they found that it was an ample résumé of the events through which the Question had wandered during a most critical time, beginning with the San Stefano negotiations and concluding with the signature of the Berlin Treaty. During these eventful months the fate of the Armenians had passed through many phases. The key sentence of his explanations, "In politics one must do what is possible if one cannot do what is desirable,"<sup>13</sup> well expresses the tone of the report. The retention of Article 16 in the San Stefano Treaty had become difficult; it had either to be modified or dropped. But it could not be dropped, "for inhumanity and inhuman oppressions are things impossible for the liberal-minded nation that England is." Through the unremitting labors of the delegates and the hearty support of some plenipotentiaries the Armenian case was placed on the Agenda. All was going well until the Cyprus Convention cropped up suddenly. But "that Convention, if put into force, is of undeniable benefit to Turkey and to the Armenians, . . . though it was an obstacle to a just consideration of the Armenian Question by the Congress."<sup>14</sup>

All of these expressions by the Patriarch show that he too was not

<sup>7</sup>The Congress was in session exactly one month.

<sup>8</sup>One is not surprised to observe that during this corresponding period the Armenian Question was discussed more often in the Commons than in the Armenian National Assembly. The Commons was in session throughout the month while the Armenian National Assembly had only three meetings during that month.

<sup>9</sup>*Records*, June 9/22, 1878, 22.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, June 23/July 5, 1878, 10-11.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 6/19, 1878, 179.

<sup>12</sup>This is one of the longest addresses recorded (*Records*, Aug. 4/17, 1878, 60-8) in the history of the Assembly.

<sup>13</sup>*Records*, Aug. 4/17, 1878, 63.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 66.

entirely aware of the rut into which the whole matter had been thrown. And what of Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty? "If there is anything regrettable about it [the Article], it simply postpones the solution of the Armenian Question, but it does not put an end to our hopes."<sup>15</sup> This may seem to be an expression of semi-satisfaction, but of course we know that it was not so, for it is true that Article 61 did not put an end to the Armenian Question; it did put an end to the Armenians in the Armenian provinces and in all Asiatic Turkey.<sup>16</sup> To the critics who shouted that "we should never have started this dangerous game of placing our case before Europe if we could not have secured a satisfactory solution," he replied in a facile manner. "In order to succeed in the future," he said,<sup>17</sup> "one must get started, and it is well that we started when we did." But these concluding remarks betray his apparent and superficial contentment. "It is true," he said,<sup>18</sup> "that our case is not treated with complete satisfaction, but what we have already obtained through that Article is much, and of great value is the special protection of England." Apparently it was not yet obvious to the Patriarch, that even if England's protection were of any value, it was already (at least partially) diluted and neutralized by the most unwieldy of all forms of guarantees—the multilateral guarantees of the six Powers.

This half-contented mood of the Patriarch was not shared by the majority members of the Assembly, nor indeed, by the people at large. The majority was skeptical as to the value of Article 61, and those who knew what Turkish promises meant in regard to introducing reforms, either in Asiatic or in European Turkey, knew well that there was nothing in the Article out of which any definite good might be derived. "'Why?' clamored many persons, and of course with justification, 'why is it that when Turkey promises to introduce reforms [on her own initiative] in the Balkans all Europe laughs at her, while when she promises to do the same in the Armenian provinces Europe takes her at her own word?'"<sup>19</sup> This was a restatement of the truth concerning reforms in Turkey which it was impossible to deny. The Assembly, finding the explanations offered by the Patriarch unsatisfactory, at once appointed a committee of six to look into the matter of the conduct of the Patriarch and his counsellors in regard to the Armenian Question.<sup>20</sup> Thus, in a mood of despair, the Assembly was looking for the *bête noire*; but, as we know, this search for the snake in the grass was in vain. The mischief was done secretly, elsewhere and by men over whom the Patriarch and his counsellors had no control.

<sup>15</sup>*Records*, Aug. 4/17, 1878, 66.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.* the statement of Seton-Watson at the head of this chapter and also cf. his *op. cit.*, 527.

<sup>17</sup>*Records*, Aug. 4/17, 1878, 66.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 470-71, taken from the Armenian daily *Meshak* (1878, No. 117), of Tiflis.

<sup>20</sup>*Records*, Aug. 4/17, 1878, 93.

The heading of this chapter is not to be taken merely literally. "The Road Back" is meant to imply more than the return of disillusioned and despairing Armenians from Berlin. In particular it means a return to the miseries of the *status quo ante bellum* for the Armenians in the Asiatic provinces. While the Assembly was debating the miscarriage of the Armenian Question, the misrule and misery in the provinces had not abated or relaxed in any way. If anything, the situation was becoming more critical, as was depicted in some 500 folio pages of the Parliamentary Papers,<sup>21</sup> filled with the reports of British representatives from Asia Minor covering the last half of the year 1878. Most of these despatches deal with the misery and suffering of the Armenians in their native provinces. Indeed, their contents are so heavily laden with tales of inconceivable horrors and endless sufferings that many a reader may think they are entirely partial, and written to the prejudice of all other peoples living in these provinces. It would not be difficult to be so impressed after a perusal of these despatches; yet the unanimous emphasis which all the representatives of other governments place upon this one aspect of the conditions is sufficient proof that they are not written to the prejudice of or in favor of any one group.<sup>22</sup> As such these Papers constitute an indispensable source for the historian of the Armenian people.

The conditions of the people in the border districts, such as in Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Bayazid, etc., was bad enough, especially during the war, but the lot of those inhabiting the interior was no better. The Armenian inhabitants of the former places, when pressed and harrassed by the Kurds and the Circassians, could and usually would cross the border and find themselves welcomed in the tents or the barracks prepared for them by their kinsmen in the Caucasus. Soon after the exchange of ratifications of the Berlin Treaty the Russian army began to evacuate the Armenian provinces. Then large groups of Armenians followed the army. They might or might not have regarded the Russians as deliverers but, as Bryce stated,<sup>23</sup> they well knew that the Turks and Kurds were to accuse them of complicity with the Russians and then wreak their revenge. The "Christians of Erzeroum are preparing to follow the Russian army," wrote vice-consul Biliotti<sup>24</sup> from Trebizond on September 6. This exodus of the Armenians took such large proportions that the commanding Russian officer, General Lazarev (himself an Armenian), issued "a proclamation addressed to the Armenian population and invited them not to leave their homes."<sup>25</sup> Consul Lyall wrote from Tiflis on September 18 that "subsequent to the evacuation of Erzeroum, Bayazid and the adjoining districts

<sup>21</sup>Turkey Nos. 53 and 54 (1878).

<sup>22</sup>In addition to the official reports of various consular representatives, individual observers, such as H. T. Tozer (*Turkish Armenia and Eastern Asia Minor*) and H. C. Barkley (*A Ride Through Armenia*), both contemporary travellers, tell similar tales of horrors in their works.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, ante, p. 57, note 1.

<sup>24</sup>Turkey No. 53 (1878), 78.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 222.

of Turkish Armenia by the Russians, several thousand Armenians, . . . . commenced an exodus."<sup>26</sup>

Those who thus abandoned their homes and faced all the hardship of emigration during the bleak winter days were perhaps more fortunate than those who remained behind. The Kurds and the Turks, upon the departure of the Russians, once more were to fall upon them. The condition thus became desperate, and perhaps worse than it was during the war. "There is no doubt that the state of the vilayet [of Erzerum]," wrote Captain Trotter<sup>27</sup> to Salisbury on December 21, "is most unsatisfactory, and all reliable accounts agree that the present condition of the Christians throughout the districts (except the city of Diarbekir) is worse than it has been at any period during the past several years. The Kurds seem to have the upper hand everywhere, and in some places arson, assault, and rape are committed almost with impunity." A week later he again wrote from Diarbekir: "Daily complaints of the most distressing kind are constantly dinned into my ears by the representatives of various Christian communities here."<sup>28</sup>

Nor was this abominable condition limited to a few places. From Van came the shocking news that the Armenians there, in order to save their lives, were becoming Kurdish converts.<sup>29</sup> It was urged that the Patriarch again make representations at the Porte for the prompt execution of Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin.<sup>30</sup> And the Patriarch did make such representations, but all of these were of no avail; and as the calendar year 1878 completed its course thousands of Armenians had run away from their homeland. The year was a fateful one for them. If the early 'seventies were properly termed as the *Bildungsjahre*, then the year 1878 was to become *die Jahre Entscheidung*, the year of division and separation, for that year severed a large body of Armenians from their nativity, either casting them on the road of emigration or translating them into the other world. With the passing of the year the hope of the survivors looked often bright and more often terribly dark. And as the new year began matters had not improved at all. The Patriarch, unable to get redress for the wrongs his people had suffered and despairing in the midst of the criticism heaped upon him, tendered his resignation to the Porte. But it was accepted neither by the Sultan nor by the Armenian Assembly, and he was to continue at his post five more years and see the bitter fruits of his ceaseless labors come to naught. In the meantime—indeed, even some time earlier—the matter of reforms was being broached at the Porte from another quarter. The British government was attempting to save its face by trying to discharge some of the obligations incurred in connection with

<sup>26</sup>*Turkey* No. 54 (1878), 49.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 10 (1879), 8-9.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>29</sup>*Records*, Aug. 25/Sept. 7, 1878, 109-111.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 10/23, 1878, 214.



the amelioration of the conditions in the Asiatic provinces. It is now necessary to see how these reforms, "demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians," were to be tried out.<sup>31</sup>

"Englishmen have suffered much," wrote the biographer of Salisbury (II, 303-304), "in reputation by a tendency on the part of critics—and sometimes by mistaken friends—to invert the order of this sequence [the sequence of interference in defence of England's threatened interests, and the opportunity for a 'civilizing mission']. They become subject to the charge of posing as crusaders with a covert eye to eventual profit,—whereas they are really instinctive empire-builders *with a peculiar capacity for altruistic and efficient acceptance of the responsibilities that result.*"<sup>32</sup> The words italicized are worth noting, for in the carrying out of the provisions of the Cyprus Convention their veracity was to be tested. Salisbury at first proved to be more earnest in trying to carry out the obligations which England had incurred. Even before the Convention was made public and while he was buried under the labors of the Congress at Berlin he addressed a letter to Layard on June 25 in which he stated that if he (Layard) could "obtain intelligent governors with a tolerably secure tenure for a short term of years and a pure administration of justice" in the government of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, then "great progress would be made."<sup>33</sup> He expressed the hope that some Englishmen would be placed in the higher and more responsible positions, for "any attempt to reform the Empire by using Englishmen in the inferior places without using them in the superior would, I fear, only end in disappointment."<sup>34</sup> This, however, was a note of reminder to the Ambassador; the formal proposal for a scheme of reforms was to be developed in a long despatch<sup>35</sup> of August 8, after the ratification of the Treaty of Berlin and of the Cyprus Convention.

The scheme of reforms outlined in this despatch dealt with four specific matters, namely: it called for a gendarmerie in the "Asiatic provinces to be organized and commanded by Europeans;" the instituting of central tribunals with powers of jurisdiction over the lower courts; the appointment of responsible tax collectors in each vilayet; and the appointment of valis (Governors-General) and judges "during good behavior for a fixed number of years."<sup>36</sup> By the execution of this scheme, it was hoped—and with good reason—that most, if not all the ills of

<sup>31</sup>In this connection cf. Lee, *op. cit.*, 125-68, and Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 509-35.

<sup>32</sup>Italics are not in the original.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 304-305.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>35</sup>Turkey No. 51 (1878), 1-4. On July 13 Salisbury transmitted the Treaty and the Convention to his government. In the covering letter he made the following statement: "Arrangements . . . have provided for the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan security for the present, and the hope of prosperity and stability in the future."

<sup>36</sup>"Whether use will be made of this—probably the last—opportunity which has been thus obtained for Turkey by the interposition of the Powers of Europe, and of England in particular, or whether it is to be thrown away, will depend upon the sincerity with which Turkish statesmen now address themselves to the duties of good government and the task of reform." Turkey No. 38 (1878), 24.

<sup>37</sup>Turkey No. 51 (1878), 4.

which the Armenians had complained would be eliminated. The Kurds and the Circassians were yet to be brought to order, but the above outlined scheme was to take precedence over the disposing of the Kurdish and Circassian brigands. An efficient gendarmerie, the abolition of tithe-farming, the reform in the judicial system and the securing of honest and intelligent governors and judges with their tenure of office secured, were nearly all that the Armenians had asked for during the previous years, in their petitions and complaints addressed to the Porte. Order and justice, and revenue for the maintenance of order and justice were to be had, with honest and intelligent men to carry on the government. If these could be had through the instrumentality of the English government, then the Cyprus Convention as well as Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty might be regarded as charters for the delivery of the Armenians from their endless misery—these might have been taken as God-sent means to deliver such God-fearing simple souls from the clutches of inhuman barbarism.

But there were obstacles for the introduction and the execution of this satisfactory scheme. The gendarmerie, to be efficient, had to be "organized and commanded by Europeans." In each of the central tribunals, to be instituted in a certain number of Asiatic towns, there had to be "a European learned in the law" whose consent was deemed necessary in every judgment. The "collector also," Salisbury had stated, "should be in most cases a European." These were the conditions to be asked from the Sultan. Would he, as an independent sovereign, consent to these terms? There was the rub; and the withholding of that consent, more than any other single item, was to make all the efforts at reforms abortive. Yet with what simplicity Salisbury expected that the Porte would consent to the terms which it had stubbornly and repeatedly refused when asked for in the Andrassy Note, the Berlin Memorandum, and the Conference of Constantinople, for the European provinces alone, is difficult to conceive. He was soon to learn, if he had not already learned, that to bully the Sultan in one of his frightened moods into signing an agreement is quite easy, but to have him appoint Europeans on his judicial tribunals was impossible. Had Salisbury not written from the Conference of Constantinople that "convincing the Turk is about as easy a matter as making a donkey canter"?<sup>37</sup> Did he now think that by the Cyprus Convention the Turk had changed? He set about finding that out. Layard was told that "no time should be lost in inviting the Ministers of the Porte to commence" negotiations over the matter of reforms and then to send in his "earliest possible report of the progress and prospects" of these negotiations.

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<sup>37</sup>Quoted in Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 120, from a letter written to Carnarvon on Jan. 4, 1877.

The Ambassador proceeded to the task that was entrusted to his "own experienced judgment," and he at once started negotiations with Safvet Pasha the Grand Vizir. In a *Note Verbale* addressed to Safvet Pasha he stated that "in no part of the dominions is the need of it [of reforms] so crying as on the north-eastern frontier of His Imperial Majesty's Asiatic provinces."<sup>38</sup> Even at the beginning of these negotiations, however, Layard was met with a spirit of only half-hearted cooperation. Every one of the proposals in the scheme was met with "no objection," but the time was thought to be improper to carry any of them out. Safvet Pasha "saw no objection to the organization of a gendarmerie under European officers," but "the want of money" made it impossible. He "observed that Tribunals of Appeal already existed in all the principal cities of the Empire; all that was required was to find competent and honest men to preside over them." As to the presence of European judges on these tribunals, he stated that "there had always been a very strong objection on the part of the Turkish people to the employment of foreigners in judicial posts." The appointment of a responsible collector and the abolition of the tithe-farming "had long been contemplated by the Porte, . . . but the population of the Ottoman Empire had been accustomed from time immemorial to the payment of tithes in kind." Besides, the government, "not having a proper survey, or *cadaastre*, of the land, would have no basis for substituting for the tithes a fixed rent or tax." As to the tenure of offices of the valis and the judges, Safvet Pasha stated that "according to the Turkish Constitution [the Constitution was in suspense at the time] the latter were already immovable, and if good men could be found for governors," the proposal would be acceptable.<sup>39</sup>

Was there anything new or surprising in any one of these evasive answers? They once more proved that the Porte would not willingly or readily introduce reforms in its dominions unless pressed to do so. And now, backed by the alliance of England and secure against an immediate attack from Russia, it could afford to ignore such proposals, or oppose a polite refusal, or raise obstacles against their adoption and execution, even though such proposals came from Her Britannic Majesty's friendly government. "The general impression," concluded Layard's despatch to Salisbury,<sup>40</sup> "I derived from my conversation with the Grand Vizier is that a good deal of resistance will at first be made to some parts of the reforms proposed, . . . but they will, in the end, be acceptable in principle, . . ." This was not only an admission of the probable and eventual failure to accomplish anything in the way of reforms, but it also was a frank and open confession coming from the Turcophile Layard

<sup>38</sup>The *Note Verbale* is in *Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 6-7.

<sup>39</sup>All statements within quotation marks are taken from Layard's despatch of Aug. 21 to Salisbury found in *Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 4-5.

<sup>40</sup>*Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 4-5.

that not much could be expected in this regard, at least for the present. Such a frank but covert confession he had already made some three months earlier when he wrote to his predecessor (Elliot, on July 5): "As for settling the Turkish or Eastern Question, it [the treaty] will unsettle everything."<sup>41</sup>

In the course of the negotiations, however, the Porte for a time proved to be amenable to cooperation and assented to the plan for the organization of the gendarmerie by Europeans, "but not commanded by European officers." The Porte was also well disposed, according to Layard's despatch<sup>42</sup> of Oct. 24, toward assenting to employ European jurists in reforming its judicial system and organizing its tribunals. "But it considers that it would be contrary to the principles of the administration of justice that a foreign judge should be appointed to each tribunal. . . . It proposes, instead, to employ them as inspectors, whose duties it will be to control the administration of justice in every vilayet."<sup>43</sup> Finally, the Porte also expressed its willingness to assent to the general principles of selection, appointment and tenure of office of the valis, judges, and collectors.

These conciliatory and compromising views of the Porte on the reform scheme were couched in a Note of October 24 and sent to Layard, who in his turn, sent it to his chief with a covering letter of the same date.<sup>44</sup> It was quite a victory for the Ambassador to bring the Porte to such a workable and harmonious point of view. He found that the Sultan was "better disposed toward reforms than his ministers," and his success was attributed to His Imperial Majesty's conciliatory spirit. But the latest view of the Porte on the matter of tithes was that the direct collection method should first be introduced in some province as an experiment before its adoption for the entire Empire.<sup>45</sup>

Salisbury was quite contented with the concessions the Porte had thus far made. "They do not in all respects correspond to the proposals submitted," he wrote<sup>46</sup> to Layard on December 4, "nevertheless, they appear to Her Majesty's Government to contain in a sufficient degree the conditions of an efficient reform to justify Her Majesty's Government in accepting them as an adequate instalment of the changes to which, under the Convention of the 4th June, the Porte has generally pledged itself." Yet it was observed that the conditions under which the Porte accepted the proposals "effect their efficiency in very different degrees." Judicial inspectors had to be chosen with the utmost care,

<sup>41</sup>Quoted in Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 510, from the *Layard Papers* (Add. mss 39, 138, vol. 208) deposited at the British Museum.

<sup>42</sup>*Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 7-9.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup>For the text of the Note, in French and in English, *vid. Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 9-12.  
<sup>45</sup>Layard to Salisbury, Oct. 30, *Ibid.*, 15. It was suggested that this experiment be first tried at Smyrna.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

upon the recommendation of the English government; if this was not done, then these reforms would be "as unsubstantial as many which were promised" heretofore. He naturally was not satisfied with Safvet's answer on the organization of the gendarmerie, and the appointment of valis and judges. It was "less definite" and could not be accepted. "In some districts of the Asiatic provinces," he continued, "their [the zaptiehs'] extreme inefficiency has permitted the growth of an aggravated brigandage, which practically deprives the inhabitants of all the advantages of a settled government."<sup>47</sup> If the appointment of valis and judges could not be had as proposed in the scheme, then they must be under the vigilance of the representatives of friendly powers. "Especially will such an obligation," he emphasized,<sup>48</sup> "be incumbent on England, who in performing it, will not merely be tendering friendly counsel, but will be insisting on a Treaty right." The Porte's suggestion that part of the reforms be first tried in a province before introducing them in all parts of the Empire met his approval. All of these might be tried in one or more provinces at first, and Layard was told that "the precise arrangements by which this suggestion should be carried into effect must be left to the judgment of Your Excellency and the Ministers of the Porte."<sup>49</sup> He did not, however, fail to add that the first essential thing in the "provinces exposed to the ravages of the Kurds" was a well-led gendarmerie for the "well-being and almost the existence of peaceable inhabitants."

At about this time the suggestion was made by Captain Trotter, in charge of the Erzerum Consulate, that consular officers be appointed in certain cities in Asia Minor. In his long letter of December 21, 1878, to Layard<sup>50</sup> he specifically mentioned the places where officers might be stationed. There was to be a Consul-General for Kurdistan,<sup>51</sup> with jurisdiction over Erzerum and Diarbekir; consuls and vice-consuls were to be stationed at Diarbekir, Erzerum, Kharput, Van, and Bitlis. This idea was warmly seconded by Layard. "I entirely concur," he wrote to Salisbury,<sup>52</sup> "in his opinion that the presence of good Consular officers is the most effective check upon misconduct on the part of the local authorities, and affords the best guarantee for the protection of the Christians and for the due execution of the required reforms."

This suggestion fell in line with that of Salisbury which he had mentioned in his despatch to Layard on December 4. Subsequently Colonel Charles W. Wilson was selected for the post of Consul-General in

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>*Turkey No. 10 (1879), 8-9.*

<sup>51</sup>Kurdistan was the name often given to the Armenian provinces. The Patriarch was disturbed to see the term "Armenia" displaced by "Kurdistan" and complained to Layard. *Vid. Layard to Salisbury, July 11, 1879, Turkey No. 10 (1879), 62 and 105.*

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 7-8.

Anatolia, and Captain Trotter for Kurdistan. On April 24 (1879) the former was notified of his appointment and given some instructions. "Your principal duty," read part of the instructions,<sup>53</sup> "and that of the officers appointed to assist you, will be to inquire into the conditions of the various classes of the population within your Consular district, assisting the Turkish authorities with your advice, . . . noting and remonstrating against all cases of oppression or corruption on the part of the Executive and the Judiciary which may come to your knowledge." All such infractions brought to his notice, he was to report to the Ambassador. Six others were nominated to serve in the Asiatic provinces in the capacity of Military Vice-Consuls, in addition to the resident consuls and vice-consuls already there. Four of these were to be stationed in the towns under the consular jurisdiction of Colonel Wilson, while the two others were to aid Captain Trotter.<sup>54</sup> Colonel Wilson, with his headquarters at Sivas, and Captain Trotter stationed at Erzerum, both aided by this host of military vice-consuls, were to undertake a task that was fraught with difficulties almost insurmountable. They were to go there not only for the purpose of reforming the defunct Ottoman Empire, but were to be looked upon as protectors of the Porte's oppressed subjects. Beginning early in 1879 they plunged into their tasks, and two years later, at the time of their withdrawal, they confessed their failures just as their forceful chief at the Foreign Office (Salisbury) had confessed his failure at the Constantinople Conference.

In July Colonel Wilson was making his tour in western and central Asia Minor, and everywhere he went he observed unspeakable misery, especially among the Christians. In the city of Konieh and throughout the vilayet he noticed that there the Circassians had become numerous and the insecurity was such that Christian families had left their homes.<sup>55</sup> At Eregli and Nigdeh, at places to the east in Kaiserieh and the surroundings, these immigrants were causing similar horrors. On July 12 he arrived at Sivas and was greeted by the Christian population, though he "was much surprized that not a single Turk came to welcome" him.<sup>56</sup> The former regarded him "as the saviour of the country," one who was to give "new life to them, and prayed that all kinds of blessings might be showered upon" him.<sup>57</sup> But this "saviour" was fully aware of his limitations. "My heart felt sore," he states in a memo-

<sup>53</sup>Turkey No. 10 (1879), 63-4. Cf. also C. M. Watson's *The Life of Major-General Sir Charles William Wilson*, 105-107.

<sup>54</sup>Turkey No. 11 (1879), 1. Lieutenant H. Chermiside was to be stationed at Aidin, Captain H. Cooper at Kaiserieh, Lieutenant H. H. Kitchener at Kastemouni, and Captain J. D. H. Stewart at Konieh; Captains E. Clayton and W. Everett were subsequently stationed at Van and Erzerum respectively. Later Captain Cooper was succeeded by Lieutenant F. W. Bennett, and Major J. Picton-Warlow replaced Lieutenant Kitchener. Cf. Watson, *op. cit.*, 108-9.

<sup>55</sup>Turkey No. 10 (1879), 125.

<sup>56</sup>Watson, *op. cit.*, 114.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 113-4.

randum,<sup>58</sup> "when I thought how little I could do for them, for I have no power to help except to use such moral influence as my presence here may exert. Not content with tying my hands, the Turkish government have bound my feet also, so that even if I would run, I could not." In the words of Lord Sandon,<sup>59</sup> these oppressed peoples for years were raising one and the same cry: "When are you coming? when are you English coming?" And now an Englishman had come, but alas! his hands and feet were tied by the Turkish government. The only thing that he and his assistants could do, as Salisbury himself stated in the Lords,<sup>60</sup> was "to bring to the knowledge of the Turkish Government abuses that exist and of which it is not fully aware, and so help to bring about a more rapid and effectual remedy." But in a country where things had to be done "very, very slowly,"<sup>61</sup> there the application of "more rapid and effectual" remedies was out of the question; and the Consuls-General as well as the military vice-consuls assisting them were to limit themselves to observing and reporting the existing abuses.

On August 6 Colonel Wilson sent in a memorandum based upon the notes gathered during his tour from Konieh to Sivas. Therein he at length described the conditions as representing the general situation in Asia Minor. He found the *zaptiehs* (the police) "in a deplorable state;" and the tithe-farming was going on as before, with all its attendant abuses and evils. He remarked that "The assessors appear to have valued Christian property too high, whilst Moslem property was undervalued."<sup>62</sup> The state of the courts left much to be desired. Recently tribunals had been set up with Christian representatives on them, but these, "from want of independence or timidity," were often afraid to oppose unjust decisions." The incursion of the Circassians into the country had created a difficult task for the government. The "local government," he wrote,<sup>63</sup> "possesses little influence over them. . . . This feeling [of fear] is increased by the fact that the Circassians, having powerful protectors on the Councils [tribunals], are rarely punished, and that those who attempt to bring them to justice have good reason to fear their revenge. The robber bands are well known, and could easily be suppressed if the Government showed itself in earnest; and if the Circassian Beys were held responsible for the conduct of their people, disturbances would soon cease." In his opinion, "The most urgent reform needed by these poor people

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>59</sup>*Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 242, 670-71.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 247, 826.

<sup>61</sup>"Nothing Turkish," said Salisbury on June 27 (*Ibid.*, 825), "I ever knew did go fast; and that is one of the qualities of the people which I am afraid no politics and diplomacy will change."

<sup>62</sup>*Turkey* No. 10 (1879), 125-9. This document is reproduced in Watson, *op. cit.*, 116-22.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 128.

is relief from the merciless robbery of the tax collectors, and the grasping avarice of the money-lenders."<sup>64</sup> But he did not fail to add that "such relief can only result from an earnest effort at good government, and that must be the work of time."<sup>65</sup>

Much more could be gleaned from this lengthy memorandum, but the telling passages quoted depict quite correctly the miserable conditions that prevailed exactly a year after the ratification of the Treaty and the Convention. Captain Trotter's statement<sup>66</sup> that "all reliable accounts agree that the present condition of the Christians throughout the districts is worse than it has been at any period during the past several years," corroborates well what Colonel Wilson reports concerning the sector under his consular jurisdiction. And what the Consul-General reported was repeatedly confirmed by the tenure of reports coming in from the military and civil vice-consuls stationed in various parts of Asiatic Turkey. At each instance it was the conviction of the officer thus stationed in Asia Minor that the source of all—or nearly all—evils was the government; and the central government was held especially responsible for such evils.

But if the Porte seemed unwilling to accept the British scheme of proposals, it showed some readiness in going through the form of co-operating with Layard and his subordinates. It was proposed that mixed courts (tribunals) be instituted at certain places to hear the complaints of the Christians; Captain Trotter wrote to Salisbury on November 28, 1878, that such a tribunal was constituted at Erzerum,<sup>67</sup> consisting of three Turks and two Armenians. Early in the following February it was also decided to send "two Commissions into the Eastern Asia Minor, and to Kurdistan, to inquire into the condition of the country, and into the grievances of the Christians."<sup>68</sup> Thereupon Layard suggested and Salisbury agreed that "an English officer might, . . . occasionally accompany the Turkish Commissioners, without receiving any official recognition or sanction from the Turkish Government."<sup>69</sup> Major Trotter<sup>70</sup> was instructed to hold himself in readiness to join the commissioners at Erzerum, while the commission destined for the province of Aleppo was to be accompanied by Lieutenant Chermiside.<sup>71</sup> Each commission was made up of two commissioners, one Turk and one Armenian. It was at first understood that these were to be of equal rank, but the Porte saw to it that in each case, as in the case of a third commission subsequently sent to Diarbekir, the Turkish member re-

<sup>64</sup>Watson, *op. cit.*, 121-2.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup>Quoted *ante*, p. 92.

<sup>67</sup>*Turkey* No. 10 (1878), 5-6.

<sup>68</sup>*Turkey* No. 1 (1880), 25.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup>Captain Trotter was promoted to the rank of Major.

<sup>71</sup>*Turkey* No. 1 (1880), 25.



ceived higher rank as the first commissioner.<sup>73</sup> Aside from the handicaps under which these commissions had to work, this distinction of rank paved the way for further difficulties in their work.

It was hoped that these commissions would address themselves to their tasks seriously and, besides redressing wrongs and injustices, would propose workable reforms. Salisbury himself seemed to be somewhat sanguine about their intended good work and on June 27 told the Lords that "a Commission is now sitting in Armenia, . . . to consider and report upon the reforms that ought to be carried out in Asia Minor."<sup>73</sup> But such expectations, however hopefully expressed, were soon to be forsaken. These commissions which were to be vested with "very extensive powers," were actually hampered in their work by local authorities and checked by the central government,<sup>74</sup> while in one case (the commission in Aleppo) the two commissioners were working at cross purposes.

The commission sent to Erzerum was faced with the difficult task of redressing the wrongs suffered by the inhabitants of Alashkerd and Geghi, and instituting a local commission in the city of Erzerum. To do the first it was necessary to bring the unruly Kurdish chiefs to order and to dismiss corrupt officials, but that proved to be well-nigh impossible without the cooperation of the local authorities and the backing of the government at Constantinople.<sup>75</sup> To accomplish its second object the commission had to secure the harmonious cooperation of the people in the city and the districts, but that too was not forthcoming. When a temporary commission was set up in which the Armenians were outnumbered four to one, they demanded equal representation even though their numerical strength against the combined Turkish-Kurdish population was said to be about one to three. They based their demand upon the plea that in the computation the Kurds of the districts should not be taken into account since they were nomads and paid no taxes to the government. This might or might not have been a justifiable demand, but the commission neither tried to satisfy the demands nor smooth out the differences existing between the Armenians and the Mohammedans. Later on when the commission proceeded to Van, there too it was faced with similar difficulties.<sup>76</sup> In no case could the commissions secure the harmonious cooperation of the valis, and in not a single important instance were they supported by the government at Constantinople. At times it appeared that the two-fold role of the

<sup>73</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 10, 11, 37, 65.

<sup>74</sup>*Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 247, 819.

<sup>75</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 3-4.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, 50-51.

<sup>77</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1880), 156. The claims of the Armenians are set forth in the "Armenian Project of Reforms," presented by the Armenians of Erzerum to Major Trotter. *Vid. Turkey* No. 23 (1880), 17-26.

British ambassador was to direct the consuls and vice-consuls to help in the work of the commission, and to exhort the Sultan and his ministers so that more powers might be given to the commissioners.<sup>77</sup>

The commission sent to Aleppo was first faced with the affairs at Zeitoun. This almost semi-independent district in the mountain fastnesses of Taurus, inhabited mostly by Armenians, was being infested with Circassians; the presence of these Circassians was "their great grievance" against the government. They believed that the governor of Aleppo (a certain Kiamil Pasha) deliberately "wished to surround Zeitoun with Circassians to intimidate, if not to exterminate, the inhabitants."<sup>78</sup> Lieutenant Chermside reported from the scene that the apprehensions and fears of the inhabitants "seem to be borne out by facts." The governor had disarmed the Christian Zeitounlis, while the Mussulman population of the neighborhood, including of course the Circassians, remained armed.<sup>79</sup> This procedure had created an uneasy situation for the Armenians, and when the governor pressed for more and heavier taxes, these were considered exorbitant by the inhabitants and they refused to pay; led by a chief named Babeck, they defied the authorities of the government. Then the governor fell upon some unprotected Armenian villagers and imprisoned some 200 of them as criminals.<sup>80</sup> These innocent souls were suffering when the commission arrived at Aleppo. British Consul Henderson thought the prisoners were brutally tortured by the governor, and some were even murdered. A preliminary examination of the case proved that all the troubles were caused by the governor, and that he was responsible for the disturbances. Lieutenant Chermside, after a visit to the scene, reported that "the condition of the town and people of Zeitoun is a disgrace to any Government."<sup>81</sup> Upon the testimony of Henderson and Chermside, and upon the strong representations made by Layard, the governor was dismissed, the prisoners were released and the submission of the defiant Zeitounlis was secured.<sup>82</sup> Then the commission set out upon its task of investigation and inquiry into the abuses and corruptions, but here again it could not secure the support of the government at the capital and so accomplished practically nothing.

A third commission, made up of Abedin Pasha and Manas Effendi, proceeded to Diarbekir, and thanks to its energetic labors, a great number of Kurdish chiefs were caught and imprisoned. These were sent to Aleppo and were to be exiled to Albania.<sup>83</sup> But it seems that this ac-

<sup>77</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 158-60.

<sup>78</sup>*Turkey* No. 1 (1880), 58.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>81</sup>*Turkey* No. 1 (1880), 73.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>83</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 41, 69.

complishment was due to the independence of the commissioners, especially of Abedin Pasha, for as soon as he was released from his office the matter of exiling the Kurdish chiefs was dropped, and they later "escaped" from the prison.<sup>84</sup> Some time later (November, 1879) the British ambassador secured the appointment of Baker Pasha as Inspector-General of Reforms in Asia Minor. He was perhaps the first European to be appointed to such a high post.<sup>85</sup> Baker Pasha, with his "numerous staff," travelled through Aleppo, Kharput, Diarbekir, Sivas, and other provinces early in 1880, but it was stated that he himself had no real power. His mission "turned out to be one of inquiry,"<sup>86</sup> or, as the *Annual Register* stated,<sup>87</sup> his powers were "limited to stimulating the local authorities and governors."

In the midst of such half-way measures, half-hearted cooperation of local authorities with the commissioners and with only the lukewarm support of the government in Constantinople, of course very little could be accomplished. And the difficult task of the commissioners was made almost impossible by the impending famine in the Armenian provinces and by the presence of thousands of immigrants from Russia. As a result the reports of the consuls and vice-consuls constitute a sad tale of half-hearted attempts and complete failures of proposed reforms, sufferings and depredations, raids and robberies, kidnappings, murders, and an innumerable variety of outrages.<sup>88</sup>

Of course the ambassadors at Constantinople, and especially the British ambassador, could not be indifferent to the alarming situation in the Asiatic provinces of which the latter was faithfully and punctually apprised. All this time he was busied with the presentation of *notes verbales* to the Porte, now upon the subject of giving more powers to the reform commissioners,<sup>89</sup> now about the outrages committed by the Circassians in Adabazar,<sup>90</sup> and now concerning the Kurdish depredations in the district of Geghi.<sup>91</sup> And the Porte promised to satisfy the claims of the ambassador, but promises were easily evaded as they were politely given in a facile language. Upon the matter of employing Europeans as judicial inspectors and in the organization of the gendarmerie Layard especially insisted but without any results. Towards the end of the year 1879 it had become quite obvious that the Porte was treating the remonstrances of the British ambassador in the same negligent spirit as it had always treated similar remonstrances of the Armenians. The

<sup>84</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 91, 237.

<sup>85</sup>Two other Britishers, Colonels Norton and Cooper, were appointed "to inspect the gendarmerie in Erzeroum and Bitlis," but the former was not even provided with his expenses, while the latter was given no rank at all. *Vid. Turkey* No. 23 (1880), 28-9.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>87</sup>*Annual Register*, 1880, 164.

<sup>88</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 64, 70, 113; No. 23 (1880), 12-16, 153, 233.

<sup>89</sup>*Turkey* No. 4 (1880), 15.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, 50-51.

British government was losing its influence over the Porte and that was detrimental to the Armenians.<sup>92</sup> Only a few months earlier (on June 27) Salisbury had told the Lords that he had "always found in the present Sultan a most earnest desire to wipe out those abuses which were a reproach to his Government,"<sup>93</sup> but now (on November 6) he wrote to Layard: "The character of the Sultan appears likely to be the doom of his race."<sup>94</sup> And he was not alone in realizing that the game was nearly up. He thought that even Turcophile Layard was about to give up. In a letter written to Lord Odo Russell on December 31 Salisbury remarked: "I am afraid that he has lost his temper with the Sultan, and like a Portuguese sailor in a storm is disposed to beat the idol he worshipped."<sup>95</sup> Layard himself in his last long despatch from his post to his new chief (Lord Granville), dated April 27, 1880,<sup>96</sup> surely shows that Salisbury was not wrong in his jocular remark; this despatch is almost a literal recital of failures in attempting to influence the Porte to introduce reforms into its decaying empire.

The consuls-general and their assistants remained in Asia Minor for about two years. They meant to carry out the cumbersome task entrusted to them as best they were able under the circumstances. But, as has been stated, they were constantly in conflict with Turkish authorities, especially with the agents of the central government. And that was, in the nature of their duties, inevitable. They were instructed to report not only all oppressions and corruptions that were brought to their notice but were also to intercede in favor of innocent victims. That proved to be not only an unpleasant but a thankless task. "I take this opportunity," wrote Major Trotter to Salisbury,<sup>97</sup> "of asking whether I have any right to interfere on behalf of oppressed Christian subjects of the Porte, and if so, under what authority?" Whereupon Salisbury wrote to Layard that the stipulation of Article 61 and also Article 1<sup>98</sup> of the Convention conferred that authority upon English representatives. "Any proceedings inconsistent with the spirit of that promise," he stated, "furnish an ample ground for remonstrance—by the Consul in the first instance, and afterwards, should occasion arise, by the Ambassador." Judgment had to be used and great care had to be taken not to act upon ill-founded information. "But, subject to these precautions, Great

<sup>92</sup>Buckle states (Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, VI, 366) that "the Christian nationalities . . . would profit indirectly by the ascendancy of the British Ambassador at Constantinople, where Layard bade fair to occupy the place once filled by Stratford de Redcliffe." But such a statement cannot be substantiated.

<sup>93</sup>*Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 247, 826.

<sup>94</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 319.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>96</sup>*Turkey* No. 7 (1880), 2-8.

<sup>97</sup>*Turkey* No. 10 (1880), 75.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, 76. In part Article I of the Convention read: "In return [for British protection], His Imperial Majesty the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two Powers, into the government, and for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these [Asiatic] territories." Hertslet, *op. cit.*, IV, 2723.

Britain will spare no diplomatic exertion to obtain good government for the population of Asiatic Turkey."<sup>99</sup>

In the last sentence is to be found the keynote of Salisbury's spirited but futile policy: "Great Britain will spare no diplomatic exertion, . . . ." But diplomats—and Salisbury at the head of them—had learned that diplomatic exertions, remonstrances, and notes were not sufficient to bring the Porte to reason. This is not the last time that such diplomatic fatuity was to pay tribute to straightforward and matter-of-fact statements, but it was then, when all indications and acts had proved that the Porte was incapable of moral suasion, Salisbury placed upon diplomatic exertions a rather high premium. His ambassador informed him that "unless the Porte takes care, . . . it will some day have an Armenian Question, . . . ."<sup>100</sup> But Salisbury could not and would not go beyond "diplomatic exertions." The remonstrances of the representatives were all futile, and reports came in from the provinces that the tribunals appointed by the Porte paid no attention to the complaints of the victims, but still the noble Marquis preferred to remain within the limits of "diplomatic exertions." He himself admitted that it was not an effective means to improve the lot of the oppressed peoples. It is true that such ineffective ways of dealing with the Porte would not salvage their fate, yet in his despatch to Major Trotter he stated: "The diplomacy of the Consuls in Asia Minor is all to which at present these wretchedly ill-governed populations have to look."<sup>101</sup> Thus the government which he had considered "congenial" only a year before was not what he had in mind at all; it was, as Morley had stated, an "Asiatic despotism, mitigated by the control of ambassadors."<sup>102</sup>

A few months later in a despatch to Consul-General Wilson some more admissions and confessions were to follow. England's inability to rule over these districts was, according to this despatch,<sup>103</sup> a decided drawback in her attempt to introduce reforms. "Matters of course would be better and our plans would roll much more swiftly if we were as much masters in Asia Minor as we are in the Punjaub, . . . . In the nature of things the process must be very, very slow." This was a long way from accepting "onerous responsibilities." The expression "very, very slow" is reminiscent of its equivalent in Turkish, *yavash yavash* (slowly, slowly). That has been the watchword of the wily Turk: to hurry is the work of the Devil; to go slow is the will of God. British diplomacy was now to follow the will of God! What did it matter if the fate of an entire nation was at stake and that it could be salvaged only by the

<sup>99</sup>*Turkey* No. 10 (1880), 75.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>101</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 322.

<sup>102</sup>*Fortnightly Review*, XXVII (Feb., 1877), 275.

<sup>103</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 323, quoted from a letter of Dec. 4, 1879. Admiral Hornby is said to have stated: "It's a thousand pities we don't take the country in hand, muzzle the useless but oppressive pashas, and give this brave and honest people the blessings of a good government as we do in India." Quoted in Lee, *op. cit.*, 148.

earliest and swiftest possible action? Events should not be rushed because some British statesmen and their ally, the Sultan, did not choose to be rushed.

Was Britain able to do much more than what she tried to do, or was she bound to do anything more? That has always been a question in the minds of those who look upon obligations and responsibilities incurred in good faith and on behalf of weaker parties, from the diplomatic point of view, which of course is a rather inadequate point of view, one often dictated by expediency alone. As has been observed, during the first year after the Congress of Berlin, very little was done in the way of introducing reforms except the appointment of two consuls-general and half a dozen vice-consuls to assist them. During the following year these officers had already found their task impossible of fulfillment; their position became just as embarrassing at their posts as the government was embarrassed at home. All these officers could do was to swell the already bulky volumes of the *Parliamentary Papers*<sup>104</sup> with their unvarnished accounts of the "Conditions of the Population in Asia Minor and Syria." These six hundred odd folio pages testify that nothing was done up to the time when Beaconsfield and Salisbury had to hand over the reins of the British government to Gladstone and Granville in April of 1880.

With the advent of the Liberals and the beginning of the ministry of "Righteousness in Action" a new era seemed to have been opened before the Armenian people. They had reason to hope for a great deal from that ministry, since it was headed by the most distinguished sympathizer with their fate and supporter of their cause,<sup>105</sup> though it so happened that at times this most righteous of righteous men unintentionally did some harm to their cause by identifying it with Christianity and crusade.<sup>106</sup> But even "Righteousness in Action" could not extricate itself from the diplomatic *impasse* into which the preceding ministry had placed England in its relation to the Eastern Question. The Queen in the Opening Speech stated that "the early and complete fulfilment of the Treaty of Berlin

<sup>104</sup>Turkey Nos. 4 and 23 (1880) and No. 6 (1881).

<sup>105</sup>Throughout his long life Gladstone showed an unvaried and unwearied interest in the Armenian Question and especially in the Armenian people. Even at times when he was little concerned with politics his interest in the fate of the Armenians did not cease. M. Jusserand in his posthumous memoirs (*What Me Befell*, 158) states that in October, 1893, he received many interesting letters from England; "one of these letters came from Gladstone; it was most affectionate and ended in characteristic fashion by a recommendation that, in my happiness, I should not forget the poor Armenians."

<sup>106</sup>This was yet another misfortune of the Armenians. When burning with righteous indignation men of Europe spoke and wrote of the Armenians as the only Christian people in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey that deserved to be delivered; many a lover of peace thought that a campaign started on the part of Europe for that purpose would degenerate into a crusade. "Had the members of the Eastern Question Association," wrote Norman (*op. cit.*, 159 and note), "as keen a sense of justice as they have of writing, they would long ago have obliterated the word 'Christian' from their lengthy documents. . . . The fanatical hatred towards the Moslem shown by a large section of the Christian community in England has done more harm to bring about the present crisis than we dream of."

with respect to reform and equal laws in Turkey"<sup>107</sup> was the first objective of Her Government, and at once Granville directed his attention to these matters. But this ministry, just as its predecessor, did not feel that it should press upon the Porte without the cooperation of the Concert of Europe, even though, as Granville himself admitted some time later, that Concert "had gone to the devil."<sup>108</sup> There was the danger of which Granville was warned and apprised by Bismarck that "Turkey, if pushed too hard by the Powers, might crumble in our hands."<sup>109</sup> Yet in face of these warnings he was willing to try his hand in the matter of forcing reform schemes upon the Turks.

In his letter of June 9 to the Queen,<sup>110</sup> he called Her Majesty's attention to her government's failure in this matter; "and the disinclination to use European officials [on the part of the Sultan]," he stated, "seems to have increased in consequence of the extraordinary powers which the Treaty professes to give England." Therein he also expressed the opinion that since consular officers in Asia Minor were doing nothing in the way of reforms, they might be withdrawn, and the English support to Turkey against an eventual Russian aggression might also be withheld "if she fails to introduce reforms." The Queen at once voiced her disapproval of these suggestions. "The Queen must repeat," read her reply to Granville, "she will not consent to the abandonment of Turkey, if assaulted by her powerful enemy."<sup>111</sup> She only consented to send a telegram to the Sultan which was a polite request, asking him not to thwart the desires of Europe. "English and Turkish friendship induce me to express to you," ran the telegram, "my strong hope that Your Majesty will even at the cost of some self-sacrifice meet the united wishes of Europe as to the complete fulfilment of the conditions of the Treaty of Berlin."<sup>112</sup> Of course this "please do so" request did not induce the Sultan to meet the "wishes of Europe." When the Sultan persisted in his obstinacy and Goschen advised that pressure be exerted upon him, the Queen expressed her fears that "Mr. Goschen is pushing to hostilities," and that she would not consent "to war with our old ally Turkey."<sup>113</sup>

Thus with half-hearted cooperation of the Powers, in face of the stubborn obstinacy of the Sultan and with a Sovereign who would not favor the exertion and use of force, it was little wonder that even the "Gee-Gees,"<sup>114</sup> after their valiant attempt to adjust other complications, had to register their failure in this signally urgent matter of reforms in

<sup>107</sup>Quoted in Fitzmaurice, Lord, *Life of Granville*, II, 198.

<sup>108</sup>Quoted from a letter to Lady Granville in Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, II, 223.

<sup>109</sup>*Letters of Queen Victoria*, Ser. III, vol. III, 111-2.

<sup>110</sup>Quoted in Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, II, 199.

<sup>111</sup>*Letters of Queen Victoria*, Ser. III, vol. III, 120.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>114</sup>Gladstone, Granville, and their followers were called "Gee-Gees" by Sir Robert Morier.

Asiatic Turkey.<sup>115</sup> In the meantime another expedient was tried which also proved to be abortive.

Granville wanted the Concert to act in unison in this matter and suggested presenting a "Collective Note"<sup>116</sup> to the Porte. Such a note was prepared and agreed upon by the ambassadors on September 7.<sup>117</sup> This note is a careful study of the manner in which the Porte, after promising to introduce reforms in Asiatic provinces, was evading these promises. "The Porte . . . refuses to recognize the degree of anarchy which exists in these provinces [inhabited by the Armenians]," ran the note, and the gravity of a state of things, which, if permitted to continue, would, in all probability, lead to the destruction of the Christian population of vast districts."<sup>118</sup> "Under Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin the Porte engaged itself . . ." etc. etc. Now it was deemed "absolutely necessary to carry out, without loss of time, the reforms intended to secure the life and property of the Armenians; to take immediate measures against the incursions of the Kurds. . . ." And in conclusion it was added: "The Powers once more recall to the [attention of the] Sublime Porte the essential fact that the reforms to be introduced into the provinces inhabited by the Armenians are, by Treaty engagements, to be adapted to local wants, and to be carried out under the supervision of the Powers."<sup>119</sup>

It would have been superfluous to expect any good out of this "Collective Note." Yet the diplomats were doing what their peer (Bismarck) had suggested in the course of the Berlin Congress. There, in the sixteenth session on July 9, when Gorchakov had asked for substantial guarantees for the execution of the Treaty stipulations, the reply had been: "Bismarck did not think that beforehand the Congress can be supposed to imagine [that these stipulations] would not be executed. It would be necessary to wait for an infraction in order to take notice of it, and in this case the Powers, warned by their representatives at Constantinople, could arrange to appeal to new diplomatic assemblies."<sup>120</sup> And now two years later that was being done. It was neither the first nor the last time that the Porte was to be addressed with similar notes. Speaking of the blindness of the diplomats Freeman had written: "They are so blind to the teaching of reason and experience, that, when the Turk has already lied nine hundred and ninety-nine times, they are

<sup>115</sup>Paul Knaplund in his most recent study, *Gladstone's Foreign Policy*, repeatedly and valiantly tries to vindicate, if not to justify, the failure of Gladstone's ministry in its dealing with this particular phase of the Eastern Question. The gist of his argument is that, when in office, Gladstone turned over the conduct of foreign affairs to Granville and seldom disputed the latter's authority. Cf. pp. 27-8 and especially 32-3.

<sup>116</sup>An "Identical Note" was delivered to the Porte on June 11 and that had brought forth an unsatisfactory reply. For the note *vid. Turkey* No. 9 (1880), 1-3; for the Porte's reply No. 23 (1880), 271-3.

<sup>117</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 140-6.

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>120</sup>*Turkey* No. 39 (1878), 240.



ready to trust him when he lies the thousandth time."<sup>121</sup> Nowhere else was that blindness of the diplomats to profit from the past experience brought so clearly to the surface as in the present instance. On no other ground could their conduct in this matter at this time be explained. Nor could the ministry of "Righteousness in Action" be cleared of such a charge. Surely nowhere else could the statement of Macaulay be applied with more exactness: "While the extremes of the two English parties are separated by a wide chasm, there is a frontier line where they almost blend."<sup>122</sup> This statement, rather than the explanation of Knaplund referred to above,<sup>123</sup> is the answer which brings understanding of the question. And the noble Earl who told the Lords only two years earlier (on June 27, 1879)<sup>124</sup> that the Concert which forced a Sultan to dismiss the Khedive could also force him "to appoint Christian Governors in Armenia," was on the frontier line where almost invariably such blending took place. It so happened that while Greece, Albania, Roumania, and Montenegro reaped the benefit of that "happy blending," fate had it that the Armenians could not avail themselves of its blessings.

During the fall of 1880 the efforts of the Concert were absorbed in compelling the Porte to agree on the boundary adjustments with Montenegro and with Greece. It is well to note that in each of these instances dialectical sermons administered to the Porte, by means of notes, were also ineffective until the Sultan heard that "Great Britain had asked Europe to coerce [the Porte]."<sup>125</sup> Granville then was willing to abandon a part of the scheme of reforms, and expressed his willingness "to rely mainly on the undoubted benefit to the populations which would be secured by the appointment, for a fixed term, to the office of Vali of men who have proved themselves to be capable and honest. . . ."<sup>126</sup> Therein he also expressed the inefficacy of the employment of consuls and other officials in Asiatic Turkey. Thus the organization of the gendarmerie, the reform in the judicial system, and the reform in matters of taxation were to be laid by the wayside. And it was only a matter of time before this remaining one of the four principal items, originally included in the scheme of reforms, would be abandoned. But he made another attempt to mobilize the Powers and to act, before he was willing to confess his failure in this matter.

On January 12 (1881) he addressed a note to the Powers inviting them to instruct their embassies to Constantinople to make another con-

<sup>121</sup>*British Quarterly Review*, LXVIII (Oct., 1878), 247.

<sup>122</sup>Quoted by Lecky in his preface to *Memoir on Derby*, in Sanderson and Roscoe, *op. cit.*, xvi.

<sup>123</sup>Page 102 and note 115.

<sup>124</sup>*Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 247, 830.

<sup>125</sup>Morley, J., *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, III, 10.

<sup>126</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 178.

certed representation.<sup>127</sup> Russia was willing so to act unconditionally;<sup>128</sup> France would take the matter "into consideration;"<sup>129</sup> Italy's position was not made clear; and Austria agreed to instruct her ambassador at Constantinople "to call the attention of the Porte to the question in concert with them [the other representatives], but not by collective representation. . . ."<sup>130</sup> This was a somewhat indefinite answer, though not entirely evasive. But it was Germany that laid "her flute on the table" and politely refused to play in the Concert. Lord Odo Russell reported on January 28 that "Prince Bismarck is of opinion that it would be better to delay pressing the Armenian question on the Porte until the Greek Frontier question is settled, . . . to press both simultaneously would, in Prince Bismarck's opinion, be giving the Porte a welcome excuse for further delay and procrastination."<sup>131</sup> And that seems to have decided the matter. It no doubt did occur to the Iron Chancellor that the adjustment of boundaries might equally well be postponed in order to deal with the Armenian Question, since the latter was surely more urgent; but a man with such a "practical" bent of mind could hardly consider the inevitable consequences of a diplomatic decision motivated by expediency. The one thing that can be said about him is that, concerning the Armenian Question, he did not mince words; he did not care for the Armenians and was not interested in their fate. In the following April when Lord Dufferin saw him in Berlin, he told him that "one of his first duties on reaching Constantinople would be to deal with the Armenian Question." "Was that a subject that would engage his sympathies?" The answer is recorded in Dufferin's diary as follows: "He gave me to understand that it was one in regard to which Germany would feel no very great concern."<sup>132</sup>

With another despatch on February 10 from Granville to Lord Lyons at Paris the matter was to be thrown into oblivion. "I have now to request Your Excellency to state to M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire in consequence of the objections thus raised by the German Government, Mr. Goschen will not be instructed to put forward the Armenian Question immediately on his return to Constantinople."<sup>133</sup> That brief despatch was sufficient to eliminate the Armenian Question from the arena of European diplomacy for about fifteen years. This unceremonious burial of the Question had its tragic consequences. And in the mid-'nineties, when the statesmen of Europe were once more concerned with that Question, then already some 100,000 Armenians had met their cruel

<sup>127</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 290.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>129</sup>*Ibid.*, 311.

<sup>130</sup>*Ibid.*, 313.

<sup>131</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup>Lyll, Sir Alfred, *The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava*, I, 323.

<sup>133</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 322.

fate. But that part of the Armenian Question, which is far more tragic than the part narrated in these pages, is another story.

Having carried this early phase of the history of the Armenian Question well-nigh to its conclusion, one is now tempted to "moralize." And that is more difficult than the shaping of a narrative out of the diplomatic and undiplomatic hodge-podge. If moralizing there must be, that has already been done by gifted and great men,<sup>184</sup> to the disgust of men with "practical" mentality. If one is to judge historical characters and the actors in contemporary life by the same standard (as the great Lord Acton did), then a severe judgment in the present instance is inevitable. And if one is to use the code of leniency (the one advocated by the equally great Lord Morley) by refusing to apply moral standards as a test of men's political and diplomatic actions, then there is the danger of letting some guilty ones go scot-free. In the present instance the application of either of these standards is perhaps unwarranted; at least such a practice is not to be recommended to the amateur historian. In the deliberate avoidance of these rather stern rules, one is perhaps justified in taking refuge behind the mild but mordant statement of another distinguished student. In his study of the recent Irish history,<sup>185</sup> Phillips states that the British people, "who are at bottom neither ungenerous nor cowardly, will some day awake to the fact that it was the cowardly and ungenerous policy of their Government which has been largely responsible for the woes of Ireland." This writer is tempted to make a similar statement in regard to the policy pursued by British statesmen in the Near East, and especially in regard to the abortive reform schemes in the Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

Nor can it be said that such a statement is unwarranted. Guided by a super-sensitive conscience and smarting under justifiable indignation, others have said that in the late 'seventies British diplomacy "turned the keys of Hell upon the Christians of Turkey."<sup>186</sup> Nor can one be so cynical as the great playwright G. B. Shaw<sup>187</sup> and try to deprive that diplomacy of its fine and beneficent effects. Exaggerations and over-statements aside, during the period under consideration certain British statesmen deliberately burdened their countrymen with obligations the difficulties in the fulfilment of which should have been obvious to most of them. True it is, as has been correctly and properly stated in figurative language,<sup>188</sup> that "Cyprus was the sop to Cerberus which averted any too close or critical inspection of the platter from which it had been flung." A closer study of the subject reveals that it was not so much

<sup>184</sup>*Ibid.*, for instance, Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, especially the "Preface" and the "Epilogue."

<sup>185</sup>*The Revolution in Ireland, 1906-1923*, vii.

<sup>186</sup>Quoted in MacColl, M., *England's Responsibilities Toward Armenia*, 56.

<sup>187</sup>*Ibid.* his *The Man of Destiny*, Collected Works, Ayot St. Lawrence ed., vol. VIII, 192-3.

<sup>188</sup>Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 523.

the difficulty which averted necessary critical examination of the platter as the deliberate unwillingness of the statesmen to examine it. At the time of the Berlin Congress the ubiquitous "Mr. Punch" asked Lord Beaconsfield: "But how about 'the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire?'" To that Lord "Beaconsfield shrugged his shoulders: 'A mere *façon de parler*.'" <sup>139</sup> This shrugging of shoulders and a *façon de parler* was sufficient to avert a close examination of any issue. One can readily understand the sympathetic biographer of Lord Salisbury (Lady Gwendolen Cecil): Englishmen do "become subject to the charge of posing as crusaders with a covert eye to eventual profit."<sup>140</sup> But one cannot, in the present instance, assent to her view as expressed in the last part of the following sentence: that "they [the Englishmen] are instinctive empire-builders with a peculiar capacity for altruistic and efficient acceptance of the responsibilities that result." The burden of this narrative, and especially of this lengthy chapter has been to prove that the responsibilities incurred under solemn contractual treaties were not discharged in the present instance.

Nor have the political, financial, administrative, and other inherent difficulties that stood in the way of discharging such responsibilities, by pressing upon the Sultan for the introduction of reforms in his Armenian provinces, been overlooked. Some of these have already been noted: the political and diplomatic difficulties could have been eliminated by a more forward and direct policy on the part of the Powers, and especially on the part of Great Britain; the only way to overcome the administrative difficulty was to secure the appointment of European administrators (as this was implied both in the treaty and in the convention); the financial difficulty, sufficiently serious in itself, was not insurmountable. A government that was lavishly paying its unworthy officials could have found means to eliminate this obvious difficulty.<sup>141</sup> But the difficulty encountered, aside from the unwillingness of the Sultan to carry out his formal pledges,<sup>142</sup> was an inherent one, arising from the presence of a motley array of races in the Armenian provinces. And the enthusiastic exponents of reforms (the Armenian leaders not excepted) did nothing to facilitate the solution of this difficulty.

The geographic area mentioned in Article 61, "the provinces inhabited by the Armenians," was vague and indefinite; and the Armenians,

<sup>139</sup>Punch, 74 (July 6, 1878).

<sup>140</sup>Cecil, Lady Gwendolen, *op. cit.*, II, 303-304.

<sup>141</sup>Colonel Wilson reported to Layard on Jan. 23, 1880 (*Turkey* No. 23 (1880), 56) that certain commissioners for the settlement of refugees were paid 175 pounds sterling per month plus "travelling allowances." "If," he added, "the money which the Commissioners received had been given to the refugees, . . . the unfortunate people would have been spared much suffering."

<sup>142</sup>*Id.* Lee, *op. cit.*, 159-61; Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, 520. Attempted reforms and their results are adequately summarized in a "Memorandum" prepared by Lord Tenterden (the Permanent Under-secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) under the date April 28, 1880. F. O. 358/4. The writer is indebted to Professor Lee for an abstract copy of this "Memorandum."

by burdening their just demands with "misleading statistics" that seemed to have been "designed to subserve a political purpose,"<sup>143</sup> made that vagueness appear more complicated. Judiciously and wisely they repeatedly disclaimed "any desire for political independence,"<sup>144</sup> and their sole claims, as has been eloquently stated,<sup>145</sup> were those "in regard to which the humblest man in England [or in any country, for that matter,] would have thought he was deeply wronged if the slightest doubt were thrown upon them." Yet it seems that even the British ambassador (Goschen) entertained doubts about the soundness of their cause, when he was presented with a set of statistics by the Armenian Patriarch.<sup>146</sup>

There is no need of going into this "disgusting" matter once more since that was done in one of the earlier chapters;<sup>147</sup> it is sufficient to add that the figures given by Major Trotter for his consular districts (the territories of which roughly correspond to "the provinces inhabited by the Armenians,") are both trustworthy and probably approximately correct. Therein it was shown that at that time the Armenians outnumbered the Turks by 200,000 but were outnumbered by the Kurds by 300,000.<sup>148</sup> The Turks themselves represented that the Armenians were still less numerous, as shown in their official statistics. In face of such a situation, when the advocates of reforms specified their demands and stressed the term "Armenian reforms," the unwillingness of the Turks stubbornly waxed. Partly for that reason they never intended to disturb the existing "equilibrium," that is, the supremacy and despotism of the Kurdish-Turkish element over the Armenians. Their unwillingness to upset this "equilibrium" was clearly shown even in late 1878; at that time when they were half-disposed to meet Salisbury's pressing demands for reforms, they came out with the suggestion that some reforms might be experimented upon in Smyrna and Kastemouni<sup>149</sup> but not in "the provinces inhabited by the Armenians."

In many respects the Treaty of Berlin is an important landmark for the Christian inhabitants of European Turkey. As the *Times*<sup>150</sup> observed a year after the signing of the treaty, all these inhabitants then "entered upon the new stages in their history which were opened for them by the Congress of Berlin." Slowly and gradually the Turks were forced to carry out all the provisions of that treaty dealing with the European provinces, even though the reform provision for the Armenian provinces, which was justly considered "of far more permanent

<sup>143</sup>Lynch, H. F. B., *Armensia*, II, 410, 415.

<sup>144</sup>Lord Carnarvon in the Lords on June 27, 1879, *Hansard*, Ser. III, vol. 247, 817.

<sup>145</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup>*Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 16-7.

<sup>147</sup>Chapter V, pp. 77-78.

<sup>148</sup>500,000 Turks, 700,000 Armenians, and 1,000,000 Kurds. *Vid. Turkey* No. 6 (1881), 248-60.

<sup>149</sup>*Turkey* No. 51 (1878), 15-6.

<sup>150</sup>June 28, 1879.

importance,"<sup>151</sup> was to be postponed, evaded, and abandoned. And for the helpless, defenceless, and dejected Armenians there was nothing to do but to fall back upon their own moral, intellectual, and worldly resources. Certain in the righteousness of their cause, and firm in their belief that in the future struggle moral and intellectual forces were to be of decisive importance, in their despondent and dejected state of mind, they all joined hands and displayed such a unity of character and of purpose as is almost unprecedented in their long and turbulent history. To that effort on the part of their leaders, to the introduction of Western ways and the inculcation of Western ideas for the sole purpose of educating and making a nation out of a nondescript and motley array of peoples living under three different governments and different cultures, the next and concluding chapter will be devoted.

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<sup>151</sup>*Times*, June 28, 1879.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MIND IN THE MAKING

The preparation of the mind and the heart is the preparatory work for the regeneration of the nation and for the delivery of the fatherland.—THE ENCYCLICAL OF PATRIARCH NERSES, 1878.

Europe gave us some rights, and if we do not take care of them, we cannot preserve them.—M. TCHERAZ, 1879.

Timid and submissive as they are, nearly all the Armenians cried out against the denial of justice.—C. MACFARLANE, 1847.

In his masterly essay on Robespierre, Morley states that "Historians have looked at the [French] Revolution as a plain landsman looks at the sea, . . . ."<sup>1</sup> The same may be said of the students of the Armenian Question; usually they are the plain landsmen gazing at the sea. What they see in the Question are unnecessary agitations and unjustified suppressions; shortsightedness on the part of a band of Armenian leaders and premeditated ruthlessness on the part of the Ottoman government; cowardice and servility in the victims and heartlessness and barbarity in the rulers. Such a simple view, obtained at the expense of clarity, is of course superficial and incomplete.<sup>2</sup> In an effort to avoid such defects in the present study, this concluding chapter is devoted to the elusive yet all-pervasive, often deceiving yet more often decisive, factors; that is, to the study of the internal and intellectual life of the Armenian people during the 'seventies and the 'eighties. An exhaustive account of the multiple forces that gave birth to the romantic and revolutionary nationalism is out of question; what is herein attempted is only a summary of the efforts put forth by the Armenian leaders in preparing the ground for the creation of national feeling and racial solidarity.

The term "national feeling" is perhaps as old as the nation; it probably first manifested itself in the "kith and kin" expression. But in more modern times, and especially in more recent and contemporary times, we like to seek its roots in the "national culture." This is not the place to inquire into the origin and character of Armenian national culture, but whatever its nature, it was buried and forgotten for the Armenians in general and for those of the Ottoman Empire in particular up to about the mid-nineteenth century. Long periods of subjugation and oppression had broken the spirit of the Armenians so completely that they took on

<sup>1</sup>*Biographical Studies*, 242, (1923 edition).

<sup>2</sup>An example of the too simplified view is presented by V. Minorsky in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (II, 1148) wherein it is stated that "the Armenian revolutionary movement brought complications into the hitherto quite peaceable relations of Kurds and Armenians inasmuch as the latter had hitherto submitted to the authority of the Kurd feudal chiefs."

many of the Turkish characteristics, such as indolence, fanaticism, and even "Mohammedan fatalism."<sup>3</sup> To many Western observers<sup>4</sup> the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire were a cringing, humble, deceiving, cowardly, ignorant, and inchoate mass of people. Though a few keener observers, such as Boré, Hamlin, Smith and Dwight, Southgate and Ubicini,<sup>5</sup> have detected something more worthy of commendation, yet by and large the consensus among critical writers has been that, excepting the differences in religion and language, the Armenians were not different from the Turks.<sup>6</sup>

Such views, though superficial and in some cases decidedly prejudicial to a long-downtrodden people, were not probably incorrect for that time. The Armenians in the Capital and in other large centers were quick in emulating the trickery and deceit that were in universal practice when dealing with a domineering people. In Argyll's statement that "creatures which cannot live by strength are obliged to live by cunning,"<sup>7</sup> is found the true justification for their behavior. And if in towns they were to degrade themselves to such a degree, in the distant provinces of the Empire they had to bend their necks even lower, and practically to prostrate themselves before the haughty government officials and the ravaging Kurds: hence the reason for the meekness and cringing attributed to them by ill-informed and ill-disposed observers. When the very existence of life is at stake moral force and natural fortitude usually give way to unmanly and unadmirable characteristics; it is then that ignorance and superstition are in full swing.

Nor was this sad case of loss of national characteristics and total absence of national feeling limited to the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire; those of Persia shared a similar fate. Occasionally a faint glimmering of light was seen in far distant corners, such as the first printing of an Armenian book at Venice in 1512, or the first issue of the Armenian Bible at Amsterdam in 1666, or the founding of a monastic order in the West (at Venice) in 1701, or the beginning of the Armenian press at Madras in 1794, and the establishment of institutions of learning in Moscow and in Tiflis. But the sporadic birth of such forces had to wait long before their impact and full weight could be felt, before a proper *milieu* could be created in which they were to reign supreme. Ideas, like

<sup>3</sup>Cf. especially W. Klose's "Die Christen in der Türkei: Eine statistische Darstellung," *Zeits. f. d. Hist. Theologie*, XX (1850), 297-347.

<sup>4</sup>Hamilton, Sir W. (*Researches in Asia Minor*), MacFarlane, C. (*Turkey and Its Destiny*), Wagner, M. (*Travels in Persia, Georgia, and Kurdistan*), and a host of others.

<sup>5</sup>Boré, E. (*Arménie*), Hamlin, C. (*My Life and Times*), Smith, E., and Dwight, H. G. O. (*Researches in Armenia*), Southgate, H. (*Narrative of a Tour through Armenia, Kurdistan, etc.*), Ubicini, A. (*Letters on Turkey*). Cf. Also W. Z. Ripley's *Races of Europe*.

<sup>6</sup>Klose (*loc. cit.*), writes: "Mit Ausnahme des religiösen Bekenntnisses sind die Armenier ächte Türken, sie besitzen den selben Fanatismus, denselben exklusiven Charakter, gleich den Türken behandeln sie die Frauen mit einer in Europa unbekannten Rohheit und sind dabei ebenso eifersüchtig wie die Türken, besitzen dieselbe Indolenz, haben denselben Fatalismus (trotz ihres Christenthums), dieselben hauslichen und diätetischen Gewohnheiten; . . ."

<sup>7</sup>*Our Responsibilities for Turkey*, 53.



seeds, if they are to bear the desired results, must not only fall upon fertile soil but must also be sown in proper season. It is primarily due to the absence of this "proper season" that, when during the early decades of the nineteenth century many of the Porte's subject peoples were being infected with ideas of revival and regeneration, "when excitement reigned in almost every part of the Turkish Empire," the Armenians remained singularly peaceful and loyal.

Aside from the numerous natural and external disadvantages, the Armenians were being held back and held down by two factors that were purely internal. The introduction of Catholic and Protestant teachings into the Mother Church (the Armenian Gregorian Church) has had its beneficent and in some ways cleansing effects, but throughout the first half of the nineteenth century it did more harm than good in creating ill-feeling (not to say hatred) among the Armenians. Of course such an internal dissention was readily welcomed by the government of the Porte, since it facilitated its governing task, largely based upon the principle *divide et impera*.<sup>8</sup>

A second factor which was of more telling importance during the middle twenty years of the century (1840-1860) was the struggle between the laity and the clergy. Not until these internal discords were eliminated could there be any unity and harmonious cooperation among the various elements of an "inchoate mass of people." In 1830 an apparent and satisfactory *modus vivendi* was secured with the Catholic Armenian element by the Sultan's issuance of a charter for this group; in 1850 another charter was issued for the Protestant Armenian community which satisfied its claims; and in 1860 when the laity secured a lasting victory over the clergy by limiting and circumscribing the rather unwieldy yet often deadly authority of the Patriarch through a *Règlement organique* (the National Constitution as the Armenians call it) sanctioned by the Sultan, then it might be said that the stage was set for the education of a whole nation.<sup>9</sup>

That task was not to be undertaken lightly. Here was a problem that might well tax the combined energy of all the Armenians and all the means at their disposal. The laity and the clergy, the rich and the poor, the city folk and the country peasant, the learned and the unschooled, one and all were to pull themselves together for the creation of that national feeling which in its turn was to shape the united nationality. In that work the part played by the learned, the clergy, and the well-to-do was of necessity decisive, but no less important were the means which

<sup>8</sup>For an adequate summary of these factors cf. L. Arpee's *The Armenian Awakening*, and Ormanian's *The Armenian Church*.

<sup>9</sup>For the Charter of 1830 *vid.* Young, *op. cit.*, II, 103-104; for that of 1850 *ibid.*, 108-10. For the Armenian National Constitution *vid.* Lynch, *op. cit.*, II, 443-67. Cf. also Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, *passim*, and Alboyajian's "The National Constitution," *the Calendar of the Armenian Hospital* (Armenian, 1910), 76-528.

they found at their disposal and the support which they received from the mass of the people scattered throughout the Ottoman Empire and in neighboring lands. Of considerable importance were the American missionary activities and the institutions of learning which were founded in Armenian communities. By its very nature the work devolved upon institutions rather than upon individuals; for that reason the origin and especially the purpose of such institutions as the press, the church, and the school, and a host of educational, welfare, and charitable organizations will be treated at some length.

The beginning of the Armenian press by the monthly *Azatar* (*Monitor*) in 1794 at Madras (India) is of historic importance. But that publication, begun by a certain priest John Shemavonian under rather precarious circumstances, was never able to pay for itself, and its publication was discontinued with the February issue for 1796. Then during nearly half a century all other Armenian organs published were not more than seven,<sup>10</sup> and of these only one, the *Yeghanag Piuzeanthian* (*Byzantine Calendar*, an annual published in Venice, 1803-1820), lasted more than a decade, while the rest withered away in a few years. Only in 1839 did the American Missionaries begin to publish at Smyrna the monthly *Eshdemarhan* (*Treasury of Useful Knowledge*) that was destined to continue for more than half a century.

After such a sporadic start the Armenian press made a good beginning in the 'forties and from then on the number of different publications multiplied. A mere glance at the number of publications indicates that during the middle three decades such publications increased in almost arithmetical ratio as follows: 14, 28 and 49,<sup>11</sup> something that seems rather remarkable for a stateless, scattered, and downtrodden people numbering hardly four millions. And the press of this later period differed from that of an earlier period in more than its mere numbers. It began to bear the mark of permanency; it gradually slipped out of the hands of the clergy and the clerically-minded persons who controlled it; and it was now being written in the lay Armenian language (as distinct from the classical Armenian);<sup>12</sup> and finally a most radical change appeared in its content and character. Previous publications were hardly more than annuals or calendars, and none of them intended to treat and discuss public affairs. In this, more than in any other respect, the new press differed from its predecessors. The *Arshaloys Ararathian* (*Aurora of Ararat*), begun in 1840 under the editorship of the conservative but tolerably well informed

<sup>10</sup>Yeritzian, A., "The Armenian Periodicals," *Artsakan* weekly of Tiflis, I (1882, July 11), 327-31. According to C. Levonian (*The Armenian Periodicals*, 1-36), there were only nine such publications. Cf. also A. Ravry's "La Presse et l'Histoire—Arménie," *Revue des Questions Historiques*, Ser. III, vol. 122 (July-Sept., 1935), 200-206.

<sup>11</sup>Levonian, *op. cit.*, 37-307.

<sup>12</sup>The lay Armenian language is the spoken language of today; its distinction from the classical lies in its form rather than in its content. The difference between the two is not so great as that between the modern and the Chaucerian English.

Lucas Balthazarian, was the first Armenian publication to be issued regularly first as a weekly and later as a daily. It is somewhat remarkable that it continued without interruption for forty-four years. The *Pazmaveb* (*Polyhistory*) of Venice, begun in 1843 as a monthly, and which to this day remains the oldest current Armenian publication, is the second important periodical founded in this decade. It differed materially from the *Arshaloys* in that it started as and still remains for the most part a literary magazine.

Neither of these publications, nor their ephemeral contemporaries, however, could really meet the demands of the reading public. To keep up with the accelerating pace of a fast changing world, to catch the new ideas that were in the wind blowing from the stormy West, to acquaint at least a limited number of the Armenians (and that in the towns alone) with such ideas, neither the *Pazmaveb*, issued in a distant land, nor Balthazarian's conservative *Arshaloys* were adequate. At best these were sufficient for the needs of a static society, but in a dynamic world other organs were needed, conducted by more dominating personalities. And such personalities appeared only in the 'fifties. G. Utujian (1823-1904) with his *Massis* (*Ararat*), Bishop M. Khrimian (1820-1907) with his *Ardziv Vasbouragani* (*the Eagle of Vasbouragan*), and S. Nazarian (1812-1879) with his *Hiusissapile* (*Northern Star*) of Moscow, went a long way in supplying the needs of an awakening and eagerly reading public. By their strong personality and by their domineering influence this triumvirate outdistanced any of their contemporaries in the capacity of editors as well as men of public affairs. It is perhaps safe to say that all the other publications of the 'fifties and early 'sixties could not exert the influence and enlist the strong following that these three had secured.

Nor is it fair to limit the influence of these men over their followers and upon the mass of the Armenians in general to the journals which served as their mouthpiece. Of the three, Utujian's *Massis* of Constantinople, first as a weekly and later as a daily, was destined to run a long course (1853-1908).<sup>13</sup> Nazarian's bold, spirited, and welcome venture, begun in 1858, was forced to discontinue in 1865; while Bishop Khrimian's *Ardziv*, begun in 1855 at the monastery of Varak (near Van) and as such the first journal to be issued on Armenian territory proper,<sup>14</sup> lasted only ten years. What Utujian did through tact, measured temperament, and safe and sane policy at Constantinople could not be duplicated by the more ambitious, more gifted, and even more popular Khrimian and Nazarian.<sup>15</sup> At the Turkish capital Utujian might, with considerable

<sup>13</sup>On Utujian and *Massis*, *vid.*, Levonian, *op. cit.*, 118-27 and H. Alan's G. Utujian (in Armenian). Cf. also Utujian's "Memoirs of my Childhood," *Massis*, (Feb.-Apr., 1893).

<sup>14</sup>Actually during the first three years the issues of the *Ardziv* were printed in Constantinople; only in 1858 a printing press was established in the monastery. Cf. Levonian, *op. cit.*, 139-50 and Archbishop Cooshakian's *Father Khrimian* (in Armenian).

<sup>15</sup>On Nazarian, *vid.* Leo's *Stepanos Nazarian* (in Armenian). 2 volumes.

success, play Horace Greeley (both in journalism and in Armenian politics), but Bishop Khrimian, who at his best was the Armenian Bossuet, Pius IX, and Garibaldi all in one, could not, under the circumstances, play successfully the role of any of them in his monastery isolated from the West. And Nazarian was a mere dilettante and a visionary. Utujian's aim was to weld the old and new without disturbing the foundations of society and causing any danger to the Ottoman Empire; Khrimian stoutly advocated the dissemination and grafting of the then current ideas of learning and thought upon the old traditional Armenian precepts without much regard to the existing half-Armenian and half-Ottoman social institutions; Nazarian openly and boldly championed measures wholly new, quite radical, and entirely foreign to most of the Armenian communities. Though learned (a graduate of the University of Dorpat—now Yurev in Esthonia) and tolerably well armed with Western ideas, his sad ignorance of Armenian history and his unfamiliarity with the Armenians betrayed his superficiality. As a result his ideas were neither shared nor tolerated by even those possessing most advanced views.

After a life of more than half a century it cannot be said that the Armenian press had passed beyond its pioneering stage; it was still in its childhood and did not attain adolescence until the 'sixties. As was intimated, the value of the services rendered by the triumvirate mentioned lay not so much in the success they attained through their organs as through the influence they exerted over the young, enterprising, and gifted writers that clustered around them and were inspired by them. It is significant to note that the host of able journalists and writers that flourished among the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire during the last half of the nineteenth century were trained under and bore the stamp of Utujian. In this respect he was more like the great Godkin than like Greeley; he and his *Massis* were regarded as an institution, a kind of school of journalism. Khrimian during his editorship literally reared a generation of young writers, in and out of his monastery, who were to attain distinction in later years. His immediate assistant, Bishop C. Servantzedhian (1840-1892), became a noted authority on Armenian folklore and literary antiquities. M. Hagop-Melikian (better known by his pen name Raffi, 1835-1888) was another who was inspired by Bishop Khrimian; he later became the greatest romantic and historical novelist of the race. Nor were the men gathered around Nazarian and working for his *Hiusissipile* of inferior metal. The great M. Nalbanthian (1829-1866), an esteemed friend of the two Russian revolutionists Herzen and Bakunin, the national poets R. Batganian (Camarh Katiba, 1830-1892) and S. Shahazizian (1841-1907) were the best known of a host of men

of letters that made the *Hiusissapile* what it was during its precarious and stormy existence.<sup>16</sup>

The 'sixties ushered in a new era for the Armenians, in both the Russian and the Ottoman empires. In Russia, after the disastrous Crimean War, there was an apparent relaxation of censorship, and as the new Tsar showed some liberal tendencies by his reform moves in the 'sixties, the Armenians in and out of the Caucasus felt considerably at ease. In the Ottoman Empire, though by the Treaty of Paris the cause of the Christian subjects received a setback, yet there too an apparent reform movement was in the air. It was out of this movement that the Armenians took immediate advantage and secured the Sultan's sanction for the Armenian National Constitution in 1860. The founding of Robert College at Constantinople in 1863 was another event of major importance, the real value of which was realized gradually.<sup>17</sup> And the host of Armenian students that were educated in Europe and especially in Paris during the 'forties, and who had already returned to Constantinople, had now attained mental maturity. The National Constitution was the handiwork of such men as G. Odian (1834-1887), N. Rhousinian (1819-1876), and S. Vichenian (known as Dr. Servichen, 1815-1897),<sup>18</sup> men who had breathed in the revolutionary atmosphere of Paris during and before the Revolution of 1848, and in whom the ideas of Béranger, Hugo, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, and Quinet had found a welcome lodging.<sup>19</sup>

But the 'sixties was a period of transition, one of constant effervescence and convulsion of ideas and ideals, of sudden leaps and slow relapses. The old traditional ideas of reverence (not to say sanctity) for things old and ancient, were being swept away by the new flood of democratic ideas, yet the new ideas were to be settled and planted on secure grounds. Heretofore the Church and the clergy that administered the public affairs were looked upon as being above criticism; the old regal notion that the king is above the law had its customary and tacit application to the Armenian clergy. But now in the 'sixties the clergy as well as the Church were under constant fire. This is indicated by the fact that, though the number of papers and periodicals founded during this decade equals the combined number for all previous decades (49 against 50), yet only a few of these showed any signs of permanency. All but two publications (the *Poonch*, or the *Bouquet* of Constantinople, and the *Haygagan*

<sup>16</sup>It is interesting to note that at no time during its seven years of existence was the number of *Hiusissapile's* subscribers more than 350, and most of the time the subscribers numbered less than 200. Cf. Levonian, *op. cit.*, 190-91, and especially Ananoun, *The Intellectual Enlightenment of the Armenians in Russia*, I, 319-21.

<sup>17</sup>Hamlin, C., *op. cit.*, 435.

<sup>18</sup>On Rhousinian *vid.* V. Torcomian's "Dr. Nahabed Rhousinian," *Hantes Amsorya* monthly of Vienna, XVI-XVII (1902-1903, in Armenian), and his *Dr. Servichen Effendi* (also in Armenian). There is as yet no full length portrait available of the greatest of this group, Odian, in any language.

<sup>19</sup>On this subject cf. A. Tchobanian's recent study, *Victor Hugo, Chateaubriand et Lamartine dans la littérature arménienne*, and Odian's "Preface" to Rhousinian's *A Textbook of Philosophy*, (in Armenian).

*Ashkharh*, or the *Armenian World* of Baku), begun during the first half of the decade were not in existence in 1870, while only four others (the *Sion* of Jerusalem, the *Ararat* of Etchmiadzin, and the *Asia* and the *Mamoul* of Constantinople) lasted more than a decade. The two published in the Caucasus, the *Ararat* and the *World*, were of solid substance. They set the example as to what an Armenian monthly publication might be even under the strict censorship of the Russian government. The other four named above were at best organs of second rate importance and of little consequence. Far more important was another monthly, the *Gurhoung Hayotz Ashkharhi* (the *Crane of Armenia*) of Tiflis, edited by Marcus Aghapekian (1843-1908) who was noted for his moderate and sound views as well as for the breadth of his learning in Armenian history. Its principal object was to form a bridge between the two extremes, the old conservative and the new radical views, but before such a happy fusion could be brought about he was forced to abandon his promising publication.

All of these publications, as well as others begun in the earlier decades, were to make room for a few organs that were to start early in the 'seventies. This decade is far more important for the quality rather than for the quantity of the Armenian journals it produced. According to the historian of Armenian periodicals the number of publications begun during the 'seventies was less than half those begun in the 'sixties.<sup>20</sup> Of these four, the *Meshak* (*Laborer*) and *Portz* (*Essay*) of Tiflis, the *Arevelian Mamoul* (the *Orient Press*) of Smyrna, and the *Hairenik* (*Fatherland*) of Constantinople, were destined to play a very important part in Armenian history. And the importance of these organs rests as much in the strength and character of their editors as in their contents. The last of this quartet, the *Hairenik*, begun as a weekly under the editorship of a colorless and middle-of-the-road man (a certain Vartanian), did not attain prominence until the 'eighties when it came under the guidance of better known and more talented writers, such as A. Arpiarian (1850-1908) and H. Shahnazar. The success attained by the other three was instantaneous and thus unprecedented in Armenian journalism.

Up to the 'seventies the leadership in Armenian journalism was held by men who, for the most part, were trained in France and worked in Constantinople or in Smyrna; until then the Armenians of the Russian Empire were more or less imitators of these men; they usually followed the example set before them by the editors and publicists in the two cosmopolitan cities of the Ottoman Empire. But in the 'seventies a sud-

<sup>20</sup>Twenty-one as against forty-nine. These are listed in Levonian, *op. cit.*, 309-380.

den and radical change took place, and that wholly to the advantage of the large Armenian community of Tiflis. Kricor Ardzrouni (1845-1892) and his *Meshak* did more than any one else to bring about such a change. The career of this editor is simply unequalled and unrivalled in the annals of Armenian journalism. Himself a native of Moscow and a student at the universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, the holder of a degree from Heidelberg and a visiting student at Zurich, Geneva, and Vienna (1869-1871), at the age of twenty-six he went to Tiflis and immediately set out upon a task that was to make him one of the greatest figures in the nineteenth century Armenian history.<sup>21</sup> There in January of 1872 he began as a weekly his *Meshak*, which a few years later became a daily and as such was the first important Armenian paper in the Caucasus if not in the world.

The editor was not trained to head such a paper in Armenian; even his knowledge of the Armenian language (let alone his almost complete ignorance of Armenian affairs) was sadly defective. Nor was he temperamentally fitted for the delicate job. Yet this bold, daring, quarrelsome, outspoken born fighter was to defy everything, was to overcome all obstacles set before him by the clergy, the authorities, and by the men in the profession. The result of his crusading attacks upon all of them, and especially upon the wealthy class and the clergy, as well as upon the more learned but less courageous intellectuals, was that before the end of the decade he and his paper became an institution, much as the great C. P. Scott and his *Manchester Guardian*. Ardzrouni alone of all editors could defy the clergy with impunity; he could even criticise the government and go unscathed; he was a *frondeur* through and through. He was as intolerant as he was courageous; his readers overlooked his faults and loved him for his boldness. They might not have taken him seriously; they might have disagreed with him on this or that issue, yet they all admired him and read his *Meshak*. As a result its circulation gradually and steadily rose until by the time of his death it was a "solvent" enterprise,<sup>22</sup> something rare in the history of Armenian journalism.

The *Meshak* was made by its editor, and in its turn it made the editor what he came to be to the Armenians. But neither would occupy the exalted position which they now hold were it not for those who gathered around Ardzrouni. The greatest Armenian dramatist (G. Sountoukian, 1825-1912), the greatest novelist (Raffi, 1835-1888), one of the best known of Armenian teachers and historians (S. Balasanian, 1837-1889)

<sup>21</sup>The best account of Ardzrouni's career is adequately narrated in Leo's *Kricor Ardzrouni* (in Armenian). 3 vols.

<sup>22</sup>Ananoun gives the circulation of various Armenian papers during the years 1876 and 1900; there (*op. cit.*, II, 165) it is shown that *Meshak* led nearly all other publications throughout these years.

and many other men of great talent and greater learning worked with him in making the *Meshak* an institution.<sup>23</sup>

The *Portz* was begun in 1876 as a quarterly by A. Hovhannessian (1840-1903)<sup>24</sup> on an ambitious scale, each number made up of some 200 pages and rich in its variety of learned studies on history and literature. It was planned to be an Armenian *Revue des Deux Mondes* and as such it was remarkable. Though its financial burden forced its editor to abandon its publication in 1881, yet to this day its quality and the honest scholarship it attracted remain unsurpassed.

The beginnings of solid and substantial monthlies were made in various Armenian communities; they were issued in Calcutta, Madras, Moscow, Tiflis, and Venice, but in Turkey such ventures were met with failures until M. Mamourian (1830-1901) started his *Arevelian Mamoul* in 1871. The editor was probably the person best equipped to begin such a literary and political periodical. He was one of the most widely known teachers of his day; he had already made a name for himself as a man of letters by the publication of a novel (*The Man of the Black Mountain*, based on contemporary life in Armenia) in the late 'sixties and had also published a series of essays on public life under the title *Armenian Letters* (1868). His linguistic knowledge, grounded on German, French, and English, had made him a successful translator of some noted works, the best of which is that of Goethe's *Werther* (1868). Joining hands with his townsman G. Chilinkirian (1839-1922) (the successful translator of Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Musset's *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*, and many other works), now in 1871 he launched his *Mamoul*. From the very beginning and for over three decades it was the Armenian forum wherein the most important public questions were aired and discussed. Another valuable feature of the *Mamoul* was that it printed serially the lives of Benjamin Franklin (1871-73) and George Washington (1873-74), Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1871-73), and Macaulay's *Historical Essays* (1874), besides parts of Buckle's immortal work and occasional translations of Mazzini's articles. It was rather remarkable that in the suffocating atmosphere of the Ottoman regime it was possible to print such works without inviting the deadly hand of the censor. Yet this was accomplished through the tact and circumspection of its able and widely informed editor.

It may be said that by this time the Armenian journalism had attained full maturity. Heretofore its sole aim was to inform and enlighten its readers. To that end all the efforts of the journalists and publicists were directed. In 1873 Mamourian was relentlessly preaching his crusade

<sup>23</sup>It is worth noting that the fiery and patriotic-nationalistic novels of Raffi, *Jellaleddin* and *The Bold*, (*Khente*) both taking their themes from the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, were first serially printed in the *Meshak* during 1879-1881.

<sup>24</sup>Hovhannessian was a graduate of the University of Dorpat and was well known as the editor of many Armenian works issued in German under the general title *Armenische Bibliothek* (8 volumes, Leipzig, 1886-1888).



against the "hydra-headed monster, ignorance."<sup>25</sup> Ten years later it seemed that the crusade had done the most difficult part of its task by adding a school to every church in nearly every Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire. That was remarkable considering the circumstances under which such schools were founded and the meager means through which they were maintained. But that difficult task was made pleasant by the cooperation of the Armenians in other parts of the world, especially by the material aid received from the Armenians in the Caucasus. At times such cooperation on the part of the Armenians living under different governments (not to say in different civilizations) was not easy; and the designed obstacles raised by the governments under which they lived made it difficult and hazardous and ineffective, yet it proved most beneficial and salutary.

At about this time (at the beginning of the 'eighties) another significant change was taking place in the character of the press. Heretofore editors and writers indiscriminately advocated and championed the dissemination of Western ideas in every Armenian community. No pain was taken for the assortment and discrimination of this or that idea; it was believed that education, regardless of its nature and character, would be helpful and beneficial to the public. Now, in the 'eighties, with the appearance of more learned and responsible editors, some attempts at discrimination were made. Not everything Western was deemed good and not everything Oriental and old was bad. Western learning to be most beneficial had to be taken in portions and by degrees, and if possible must be blended and harmonized with the institutions to which the Armenians were closely tied up. Only a few publicists and editors, such as S. Sbantarian and A. Hovhannessian of Tiflis, P. Kechian and A. Arpiarian of Constantinople, and M. Mamourian of Smyrna, and the publications they edited, differed from the rest by holding such sane views. They all repeatedly emphasized the fact that both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Russian Empire the salvation, if not the future, of the Armenian people lay as much in their being educated as in their close adherence to the Mother Church. They all sneered at the idea of reforming the church. To them the reform movement signified the estrangement of the people from the church and the eventual destruction of that historic institution. In the general idea of the separation of the church and state they believed; they openly admitted that in independent states this was not only expedient but wise. But in the society of subject peoples the church was more than a religious institution: it was, in a sense, the state, and any tampering with its structure was deemed not only unwise but suicidal. The watchword of Mamourian was to keep the people in

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<sup>25</sup>*Arevelian Mamoul*, III (1873, January), 11.

the fold of the church since the church represented everything national and traditional. True enough, he used to say, "to keep a people buried in its antiquities is to maim it physically, but to have it break away from its past is to have it commit suicide."<sup>26</sup> To S. Sbantarian the attack directed against the church was senseless and mere madness; "Why attack that institution, which was the embodiment of national and traditional ideals?"<sup>27</sup>

The critics often confounded the clergy with the church and denounced both, while these men, who were fully aware of all the apparent and notorious faults of the clergy, realized that these were not the faults of the institution they served. On this fundamental question, more than on any other, these few men were sufficiently strong to enlist the support of that amorphous average reader upon whom they could count. The soundness of their views as well as the shoddiness of both the extreme conservative and the extreme radical views were well gauged by even the relatively ill-informed readers in those days.<sup>28</sup>

At about this time a new kind of press was making its appearance, the kind in which newly found volatile nationalistic ideals were finding full and free expression. The spirit of discontent was yielding to that of unrest; petitions and protests were giving way to demonstration and agitation; and revolutionary ideas were becoming popular, all of which in their turn were to usher in a new era, one with which the present study is not directly concerned. Attention will now be given to the agencies, other than the press, that made the creation of the national feeling and national solidarity not only possible but inevitable.

The role of the church in the history of Christian peoples has been important and decisive, but the part played by the church in the life of subject and stateless peoples has been more important and far more decisive. This is especially true in the case of Christian peoples subjected to the Ottoman government. In the Ottoman Empire the church was, and to some extent still remains, the only institution that held such subject peoples together. There the historic racial and national distinctions counted for little; as far as the Ottoman government was concerned races and nationalities were non-existent; the religious communities alone were the recognized and sanctioned units. This religious distinction was carried on to such an extent that even foreigners found it convenient to distinguish these communities as such; the Greeks were of the Greek Orthodox community, the Armenians were of the Armenian Gregorian

<sup>26</sup>*Armenian Letters*, 4.

<sup>27</sup>Quoted in Levonian, *op. cit.*, 432.

<sup>28</sup>As was stated, the *Mamoul* and the *Hairenik* were not new, but in the 'eighties they both became more popular and were highly esteemed. The weekly *Arisacank* (the *Echo*) began in 1882; the *Arevelk* (the *Orient*) and the *Nor Tar* (*New Century*) began in 1884 as dailies and were as such the most important Armenian dailies to the end of the century.

community, and the Armenian Catholics and Protestants were not known as Armenians, but as mere Catholic and Protestant communities.<sup>29</sup>

This deliberate eradication of historic and traditional ties by the Ottoman government was perhaps intended to produce a grouping more convenient for government purposes. It was a blow to the subjected peoples, yet it has had one beneficent result in that it gave the church not only its due but a paramount importance in the lives of these peoples. That partly explains why the church maintained its supremacy over its followers in a Mohammedan state long after its authority was challenged, circumscribed and taken over by the states in the Christian West. The church in the Ottoman Empire was the citadel of authority, of conservatism and, to some extent, the stout champion of the *status quo*. And the Armenian Church was no exception; despite its purely national and rather democratic character, it was often nothing more than a ready tool in the hands of the Sultans. So it remained until there appeared disturbances within the fold of the church.

The Papal missionaries were always on the watch to "snipe" away members from the fold, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century (in 1701) an Armenian faction had founded a monastic institution in Venice, under the protective authority of the Papacy. With the beginning of the nineteenth century the Protestants were out to do the same. By this process the Armenian community of the Empire was gradually being weakened, disintegrated, and disrupted. Against that the church had to guard itself and protect its communicants. In this task first the Ottoman government allied itself with the Armenian Patriarch and fought against the new sects, but as these sects secured stronger allies in the governments whose protection they enjoyed, then the best defence of the Armenian Church was the reforms which it needed, and especially a reform in the nature of the authority with which the Patriarch was invested. This was brought about by the Armenian National Constitution of 1860, which did not materially reform the church but simply placed a veto upon the many arbitrary acts of the Patriarch. Though this came too late, and was something like locking the barn after the horse was gone, yet it served as an additional stimulant in unifying and maintaining the Armenians as a national community.

The church has always been the torch-bearer of enlightenment and learning for the Armenian people; and from the Middle Ages on, when the people lost their independence and were hopelessly scattered in all parts of the world, then the church remained the only guardian of learning and tradition throughout centuries. With all its faults and feebleness

<sup>29</sup>Cf. the works of Steen de Jehay, Ubicini, Engelhardt, and especially that of Young, *op. cit.*, II, 1-205.

it undertook that office and shouldered all attendant obligations in a manner that commanded the unstinted admiration of all its members. Its monastic institutions did the same service to the Armenians that the learned clerical orders did for the West in the late Middle Ages and early modern times. Having such a strong hold over the Armenian people, now in the nineteenth century, when the people were eagerly longing for learning and leadership, it was natural that the church should take the leading role in establishing and maintaining schools.

By the middle of the century other peoples (the Greeks, Hebrews, and Turks) were establishing educational institutions,<sup>30</sup> and the Armenians realized that they would be left behind if similar steps should not be taken by them. But under the circumstances nothing could be done without the initiative and support of the church. Whatever elementary schools there were in the Capital they were all under the direct wing of the church, administered by the church and, for the most part, taught by the priests of the church. Not infrequently church establishments served as schools. Up to the 'sixties the matter of education was carried on haphazardly. In this, as in many other matters, the initiative was taken by the Armenians scattered in other parts of the world. In the distant and small community of Calcutta a seminary was founded by a wealthy Armenian in 1821.<sup>31</sup> A decade earlier (in 1810) in the isolated community at Astrakhan the Aghababian School was founded by two wealthy Armenians.<sup>32</sup> In that same decade (in 1816) another and far more important institution was founded in Moscow by the Lazarian family (the Lazarian Institute) which in time attained the status of a higher gymnasium and became the first important Armenian institution of learning.<sup>33</sup> In 1836 the monastery of Venice founded the Mourad-Raphaelian Schools, one in Padua and one in Paris, which was also to play a primary role in the intellectual life of the people.<sup>34</sup> In 1840 the Khalibian School was founded in New Nakhichevan (near Rostov). In 1824 the Nersesian Seminary was founded in Tiflis, destined to rank second among all Armenian schools.<sup>35</sup>

These were the more important institutions established in the Armenian communities in various parts of the world. Even the Armenian community of Singapore (numbering only fifty-two members) already had its school by the middle of the nineteenth century,<sup>36</sup> but the country wherein most of the Armenians resided and the city which

<sup>30</sup>On schools in the Ottoman Empire cf. F. A. Belin's *Histoire de l'Instruction publique et du mouvement intellectuel en Orient*, and L. Bertrand's "Les Ecoles d'Orient," *Rev. d. Deux Mondes*, Ser. 5, vol. 52 (Aug. 15, 1909), 755-94 and vol. 53 (Sept. 15), 376-95.

<sup>31</sup>Leo, "Mesrob Taghiathian," in the *Corts* monthly, I (June, 1917), 73.

<sup>32</sup>Manuelian, L., *The History of Armenian Literature in Russia* (in Armenian), I, 18.

<sup>33</sup>Meserian, G., *The Memorial of the Lazarian Family* (in Armenian).

<sup>34</sup>Leo, *The Armenian Printing* (in Armenian). 2 volumes.

<sup>35</sup>Yeritzian, A., *The Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Nersesian Seminary* (in Armenian).

<sup>36</sup>Levonian, *op. cit.*, 97-98.

housed the largest Armenian community did not have a school worthy of its name until the 'eighties.

The oldest Armenian school in the Ottoman Empire was the Mesrobian School in Smyrna, founded during the early years of the French Revolution,<sup>37</sup> but a real beginning was made in the following 'thirties at Constantinople. There a seminary was founded that was forced to close its doors a few years later, partly for the lack of financial support and partly because of intrigues between the laity and the clergy.<sup>38</sup> In 1853 at last an Educational Council was organized, the main duty of which it was to found and support schools in Constantinople, but a slow start could not affect and improve the conditions in the provinces. By 1862 there was a school for girls in Aleppo, and already another girls' school (the Calfayan School) was founded in Constantinople in 1866. Three years later yet another girls' school was established in Tiflis,<sup>39</sup> but the real beginning of schools had to await the founding of educational and philanthropic organizations and the rise of a learned class, mostly educated in the West.

Soon after the adoption of the Constitution the most important Armenian organization, the Armenian Benevolent Union, was set up in Constantinople, for the purpose of "improving the financial and social conditions of the nation."<sup>40</sup> The Union promised to render signal services to the Armenian communities. The most influential and learned Armenians of Constantinople were charter members and contributors to the Union's chest, including some Armenians who occupied important posts in the Ottoman government. It was primarily an educational organization, since its first function, according to its "Announcement," was to found schools in Armenian communities in Cilicia. One of the most active and learned members of the Union (Dzerentz) was sent thither to study the conditions on the spot and ascertain the special needs of various communities, but the Ottoman, though tolerant to certain moves made by the Armenians in the Capital, could not allow the establishment of schools and the spread of enlightenment in the Armenian provincial communities to go on unchecked. Political ambition was attributed to the Union; its agent at Cilicia was told to take his leave, and finally at the Capital the Union was politely suppressed. Thus a definite check was administered to the supposedly purely non-political enterprise of the Armenians in the provinces.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup>Leo, *Mourj* monthly of Tiflis, XIII (Dec., 1901), 149.

<sup>38</sup>Saroukhan, *op. cit.*, 5-12.

<sup>39</sup>Portz monthly of Tiflis, IV (1879, No. 3), 158.

<sup>40</sup>The *Announcement of the Armenian Benevolent Union*, 3.

<sup>41</sup>Arpiarian, A., "The Intellectual Movement among the Armenians of Constantinople," in the *Nor Guiank* fortnightly of London, II (July 1, 1899), 195; Zaccarian, M., "Dr. Hovsep Shishmanian," *Aras* quarterly of St. Petersburg, II (1888, Book 2), 114-15 (both in Armenian).

But the check thus administered by the government did not at all kill the spirit of initiative among the Armenians; they continued to work with increased zeal and with similar aims. Already certain members of the suppressed Union were emphasizing the need for a national pact; and one of them (Dzerentz) had advocated the formation of an organization similar to the then newly formed Zionist organization among the Jews.<sup>42</sup> Though this was not done, yet from the 'sixties on the number of philanthropic, educational, benevolent, welfare, and patriotic organizations multiplied, both in the Capital and in the provinces, to say nothing of many others organized outside of the Ottoman Empire. The main objective of nearly every one of these organizations was to "spread free education" (Altruistic Association of Smyrna), or to "educate the homeless laborers of Constantinople free of charge" (Altruistic Association of Constantinople), or to "establish schools in the Armenian communities of Anatolia" (All-National Association of Constantinople).<sup>43</sup> Later on, in 1871, the Cilician Association was founded in Constantinople in order to "popularize national education in Cilicia;" in 1876 the Ararathian Association was founded in Constantinople to "spread free education in the Armenian provinces;" in the following year the Oriental Philo-Scholastic Association,<sup>44</sup> was founded "for the purpose of aiding in the educational work in the Armenian provinces."<sup>45</sup>

A mere glance at the names of all these organizations suggests that the national consciousness was in the making; the names of historic significance, even sacred to the people, such as Ararat, Cilicia, Ardzrounians (the name of the medieval Armenian royal family) were repeatedly appropriated by numerous organizations. In Van as early as in 1864 a local organization was set up, the Patriotic Association, and in 1872 there was another society called the Union and Emancipation.<sup>46</sup> Nationalism was frequently lurking in the minds of the educated class, and slowly but surely penetrating into the mass consciousness. And that was only natural under the circumstances. All these moves were the precursors of the revolutionary nationalism that was to get firm hold of the leaders later.

Not only were all of these organizations backed and supported by the church, but many of them were started on the initiative of the clergy; they were almost invariably headed by the Patriarch or by the provincial primates. The time had not come to dispense entirely with the initiative of the clergy, since to the government the members of the clergy still represented the only trustworthy and respectable element. In 1880 when the Armenian United Societies was formed by the union of the three strongest associations (the Ararathian, the Oriental, and the Cilician)

<sup>42</sup>*Portz*, IV (1879, Nos. 7-9), 210.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 11, 149-50.

<sup>44</sup>In strict translation the word *tebrotzaser* means school-lovers, but herein the translation *philo-scholastic* is preferred.

<sup>45</sup>*Portz*, IV (1879, No. 11), 151.

<sup>46</sup>Aghanian, C., *The Archives of Armenian History* (in Armenian), XIII, 270.

again the Patriarch as well as all the primates were to play an important part in it, though by this time the influence of the clergy was on the wane and prominent businessmen and intellectual leaders were becoming more and more popular.

The pooling of the various organizations into a centralized union is both significant and noteworthy. Heretofore numerous local and national organizations were doing all they could for the betterment of the lot of the Armenians and especially for the education of the Armenian public, but soon after the fate of the people had become a subject of European diplomacy (by the Treaty of Berlin) then they realized that scattered and local efforts were not enough to produce the desirable results. In 1878 the Patriarch had dispatched a number of learned men into the provinces for the purpose of studying the local conditions. In their comprehensive reports these men graphically described the wretched conditions under which the Armenians lived in the far off provinces; the pages of their learned works read like Arthur Young's description of pre-Revolutionary France.<sup>47</sup> They all deplored the lack of educational institutions and testified to the eagerness of the public for education, and they emphasized the fact that in order to satisfy the educational needs of these long neglected communities in the distant provinces some united and national efforts were essential, and that no local organization, however powerfully supported by all concerned, could cope with the needs. The result was the formation of the United Societies on June 1 of 1880, the sole aim and the watchword of which was "to spread education in Armenia and in Cilicia."<sup>48</sup>

By that time already the three associations named had done considerable work, especially in Armenia. There the Ararathian was most active during 1878-1879 and had founded more than a score of schools in the isolated communities in Sassoun, Mush, Van, and Bitlis.<sup>49</sup> Within a few years most, if not all, communities numbering one hundred families or more in the provinces were provided with schools and teachers, the expenses of which were, for the most part, borne by the United Societies. The financial support which this organization received from the Armenians in the Caucasus made it easy to expand its field of activity; the rather wealthy Armenian communities of Tiflis and Baku contributed liberally towards this "sacred national cause." The Philanthropic Association of Baku, the oldest (founded in 1862) if not the strongest of such organizations, at times donated a good share of its annual income for the education of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. In 1879, when

<sup>47</sup>A. Allahverdhian's *Zeitoun*, V. Vartabed Der-Minasian's *A Message on the Fatherland*, and Bishop C. Servantzedhian's *Brother Thoros* (2 vols.) are the solid volumes which are made up of their reports. They constitute one of the best sources for the study of Armenian community life in the provinces during the 'seventies and the 'eighties.

<sup>48</sup>*The Biennial Report of the Armenian United Societies*, 3.

<sup>49</sup>Arpiarian, *loc. cit.*, 247.

the Armenians in their homeland were faced with famine, through the appeal of *Meshak* of Tiflis the sum of 100,000 rubles was raised (a sum quite stupendous in those days for any Armenian community) to be expended for the benefit of the Armenians in the Armenian provinces alone. In 1880 the wealthy M. Sanasarian of St. Petersburg generously financed the founding of a secondary school in the city of Erzerum. And in that very year the United Societies established a Teachers' School in Van. In that same year the American missionaries founded the Euphrates College in the midst of the large Armenian community at Kharput.<sup>50</sup> Thus the three principal cities of the Armenian provinces were to have their important centers of learning. It is no exaggeration to say that the Armenians everywhere had almost neglected their own welfare and were thus devoting their united efforts for the improvement of the material and educational conditions in the Armenian provinces.<sup>51</sup>

But whatever they might do in their effort to raise their material and intellectual standard, even in their historic homeland, they were to remain the suspected, the despised, and the undesirable element there. Thrown in between the nomadic wild Kurdish tribes and the fanatical Turkish communities, and always closely watched over by the inefficient but unrelaxing hirelings of Sultan Abdul Hamid, they were placed in a rather unenviable situation. The more they advanced on the road of enlightenment, the more they became conscious of their almost hopeless situation, the more the government began to entertain suspicion about their activities. The "privileges" of founding schools and freedom of worshipping they freely enjoyed within limits, but as against these they were deprived of a "right" that alone carried with it power, authority and safety. All their non-Christian neighbors were invested with the "right" of bearing arms while the Armenians could not avail themselves (legally speaking) of that "right," and consequently they were obliged to submit to the cruel authority of their armed neighbors. In the past they had not been fully conscious of their racial and national solidarity and had perforce submitted to that arbitrary authority, but now in the 'eighties, when they were eagerly appropriating many Western ideas with all the attendant consequences, they found it difficult to submit any longer. Formerly they were mere *rayahs* (flocks of sheep to be fleeced); now through education and learning, labor and industry, they thought they had arisen to a higher level, possessing manly qualities and deserving human rights. The press, the church, the schools and especially men of learning had

<sup>50</sup>According to some Armenian writers the Euphrates College was to have been given the name "Armenian College," but as a deference to the Ottoman authorities, the proposed name was dropped. Cf. the *Azat Miik* weekly of Cairo, (Feb. 6, 1937).

<sup>51</sup>The Sanasarian School of Erzerum and the Teachers' School of Van antedate the founding of a school of equal rank in Constantinople (the Central School) by five years. Even the Seminary at Etchmiadzin (founded in 1874) was not receiving as much attention as were these schools in the two principal Armenian centers.



their share in bringing about this decisive and revolutionary change, but certain learned men influenced the mass of the people not so much through their activities as by means of their writings. Some of these writers first made themselves heard through the medium of the press, but later their literary output was such as to enrich and to transform completely the nineteenth century Armenian literature.

The literature of the period, and especially that of the latter half of the century, is distinguished from the earlier Armenian literature in many ways: it is less religious in its content, it is mostly the work of laymen, and it is written in the spoken or lay Armenian language. And far more important than any of these distinctions is that the new literature is purely national in spirit and content. Earlier writers had found the source of their inspiration in religion and in the Deity; the source upon which the writers of later nineteenth century drew was everything but the Deity. Even the most distinguished church fathers (Father L. Alishan and Bishop Khrimian, who did as much as any two Armenians to make the new literature national) themselves admitted that the source of their inspiration was the fatherland, the people, and the Deity.<sup>52</sup> And lay writers almost entirely were unaware of the Deity as a source of inspiration; there were only two sources of inspiration for them: the fatherland and its people. Every line and every stanza that the national poet Camarh Katiba wrote glorified the beauties of the fatherland and exalted the virtues of the Armenian people. This was no less true with the greatest novelist (Raffi), even though he showed his talons as often as his talents in criticism. Strangely enough, the greatest Armenian dramatist Sountoukian was an exception; but nearly all of the writers in his profession confined themselves almost entirely to historic national themes. As has been said,<sup>53</sup> "in thirty years (1850-1880) the drama, the poetry, journalism, oratory, the novel, all had improved and they all dwelt upon themes taken from national life."

The father of modern Armenian literature, Khachadour Apovian (1806-1848), came from a well-to-do family of the village of Kanakerh (in the province of Erivan). His sole ambition was from first to last to become a clergyman, but fate had decreed that he should not be one. The main obstacle which led to his "failure" was that he was educated at the University of Dorpat. He lived through the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29, and his immortal work (*The Woes of Armenia*, first published in 1858), is a living sketch of the sufferings his countrymen endured. It is neither a novel nor a piece of non-fiction; it has the elements of both, and its merit is not so much in its perfection as a literary masterpiece as in its being preeminently a classic example of national

<sup>52</sup>Cf. Yerejian, S., *The Life of Father Alishan*, and Archbishop Cooshakian's *Father Khrimian*, (both in Armenian).

<sup>53</sup>Herbed, in the *Keghouni* of Venice for 1901-1902, 40.

literature. Many others, and men of far greater talent and more profound in learning, wrote as well and rendered even better services to the people, yet to Apovian belongs the priority; pure in heart and in spirit, he remains the Armenian patriot writer *par excellence*.

Years before Apovian's work was published a number of other men, noted as educators and editors, were attempting to lay the foundation of a new Armenian literature. But some of these still clung to the use of the classical Armenian language, even though they embarked upon the new theme—the theme of nationalism and patriotism. Mesrob Taghiathian (1803-1858),<sup>54</sup> the versatile author of some poetical and prose works, is the best known of these writers. As a teacher in the Armenian communities in Constantinople, Etchmiadzin, Tabriz, and Calcutta, he was one of the most widely known learned men of his time and attained considerable popularity. More important, though at the beginning not as striking, were the works of the Mekhitharist fathers of Venice. Up to the mid-nineteenth century the works produced by these men dealt, for the most part, with the works and lives of Saints and the Church Fathers, but from then on even they took to subjects that were not at all religious. Now they were taking part in the making of the new national literature. In the 'fifties Father A. Pakradouni (1790-1866) enriched the new as well as the old literature by his classic, *Haik the Hero* (published in 1858), which is practically the only Armenian epic poem and which in sheer length (some 22,000 lines) exceeds Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It is the embellishment of the traditional Armenian heroes of prehistoric days, a major work of considerable significance, and a unique gem in the national literature.

The aged composer of this epic was the last of the old line of men learned in the old school. The new men were to trumpet for a new cause and to dedicate their life work for its glorification. Of such men who were then young but who had already shown unusual talent in literature was Father L. Alishan (1820-1901), the most illustrious and the best known of the Mekhitharist fathers. In the 'forties he was already writing patriotic poems in the *Pazmaveb* under the assumed name Nahabed (patriarch), and at the time of his death he had become a true patriarch in the Armenian national literature. Though to the learned he is best known through his monumental studies in history and historiography,<sup>55</sup> yet his early and lasting fame was due to these poems which were issued in 1857 in five books under the title *Nouack (Songs)*.<sup>56</sup> In the 'sixties he wrote his more popular *Memoirs on the Fatherland*<sup>57</sup> in which the note

<sup>54</sup>Mesrobe Taliasine of C. Hamlin; *vid.* his *My Life and Times*, 147 (1923 edition).

<sup>55</sup>*Ararat, Sissouane, Sissagan, the History and the Historians of Armenia*, and many other works in Armenian. The *Sissouane* was issued also in French.

<sup>56</sup>The more patriotic ones were translated into English and issued under the title *Armenian Popular Songs* in 1852.

<sup>57</sup>Published in 1870. 2 volumes.

of patriotism rose still higher. Had his works been written in the modern Armenian, he would have been even more influential and popular.

In spite of the signal services rendered by the learned clergymen to the new Armenian literature, its popularization was the work of men not connected with the church; the new literature was becoming popular in the lay language despite the stout and somewhat unreasoned opposition of many learned churchmen. Poetical and dramatic works were being published in the modern Armenian by young writers; T. Terzian (1838-1909) and M. Beshiktashlian (1829-1868) had already written in both fields with considerable success. Poetry and prose, especially learned essays dealing with current human problems, were being produced by the unflagging pen of M. Nalbanthian. And in *Sos and Vartiterh* B. Berhoshian (1837-1907), taking his theme from the nineteenth century rural Armenian life, produced the first Armenian novel in 1860. From then on nearly all branches of literature found their masters; the national poetry was refined and embellished under the fiery patriotic pens of Camarh Katiba and S. Shahazizian; the drama was placed on higher and surer ground by G. Sountoukian; national history and literary studies were offered to the reading public by the scholarly pens of S. Balasanian (1837-1889) and A. Yeritzian (1842-1902); and the novel found its master performers in Dzerentz and especially in Raffi.

Nor did the Armenian reader confine his attention to works of Armenian origin. A host of able translators and learned lovers of foreign literature assisted the reading public, and as the more popular works of European romanticists poured forth in translation from the gyrating presses of Constantinople and Smyrna, of Moscow and Tiflis, the eager Armenian reader gleefully read everything with an extraordinary avidity. The *magnum opus* of Victor Hugo was ready in Armenian in 1868 (only six years after the French issue); Eugene Sue's *Wandering Jew* was greeted by three translators;<sup>58</sup> and the more popular works of Schiller (*Wilhelm Tell*, *The Robbers*, *Don Carlos*, *The Maid of Orleans*, and *Marie Stuart*) were made available in Armenian by a number of translators. Indeed, Schiller's works were translated more often than those of any other writer. Both *Wilhelm Tell* and *The Robbers* were issued by four different translators between 1862 and 1890. Nor were other romantic poets overlooked. Byron and Heine were the gods of Camarh Katiba and Shahazizian. Not a little was drawn from the works of Béranger, while Lamartine and Chateaubriand were warmly welcomed by the translations of *Les Harmonies* (in 1859) and *Atala* (in 1858). The great Russian poets Nekrasov (1821-77) and Lermontov (1814-41) also exerted their salubrious influence upon many Armenian poets, while

<sup>58</sup>S. Vosganian's translation was issued in 1853; M. Nalbanthian's in 1858; G. Utujian's in the late 'sixties. Nalbanthian's translation was incomplete.

Shahazizian himself confessed that he owed not a little to Belinsky (1811-48) and Dobrolubov (1836-61), the founders of Russian literary criticism.<sup>59</sup>

This panoramic view of intellectual movements is not presented in praise of Armenian thinkers and writers; nor is it intended as an appraisal of their distinctive and pioneering works. It is offered only as a supplement to the preceding chapters with a view to portraying the purely internal and non-political life of the Armenian people. Neither the story of the Armenian press, nor the rise of an intellectual class, nor the spread of Western education and Western ideas among the Armenians, nor the creation of the modern Armenian literature—none of these, nor all of them enable us to ascertain correctly the mental and spiritual revolution of the people in their historic homeland. And it is not easy to evaluate the direct and indirect influence that the foreign literature exerted upon the Armenian mind; but, judging by its sheer quantity of production and popularity, it must have influenced the readers considerably. That reading public could not have been very large,<sup>60</sup> perhaps not more than 25 per cent of the Armenians of the Empire; but that 25 per cent, or even a smaller fraction, was sufficient to influence and sway the rest of the public. In 1878 Dzerentz published his first historical novel, *The Thoros Levonin*, based on the twelfth century Armenian life in Cilicia. It was reported<sup>61</sup> that within a year over 30,000 copies were sold. This sole instance does not prove much, but it at least indicates that the book was read by people other than a mere handful of the literary men. It would seem that the peasants of the isolated communities in the interior provinces, who only a few decades earlier could not even understand the popularly spoken and written language,<sup>62</sup> were now in the 'eighties taking to the reading of everything within their reach.

Just as the Treaty of Berlin forms a landmark in the political history of the Armenians, so the mid-'eighties stand out as a turning point in their intellectual history. Romantic literature had done its work in a sentimental people;<sup>63</sup> Romanticism begot patriotism, and patriotism gave birth to modern Armenian nationalism. By the mid-'eighties nationalism had become a profession of faith (*profession de foi*) for the mass of the people. Suddenly and surely the whole nation was emerging from centuries' old complacent ignorance and embarking upon the road of

<sup>59</sup>Levonian, *op. cit.*, 59-61. Cf. also P. Ishkhanian's *Public Ideas in the Poetry of R. Badagian and S. Shahazizian*, (in Armenian).

<sup>60</sup>It is impossible to know the percentage of illiterates among the Armenians at any time during the period under discussion, but it is quite safe to assume that the illiterates were far more numerous than those who had a reading knowledge of the mother language.

<sup>61</sup>*Porta*, IV (1879, No. 2), 127.

<sup>62</sup>Many isolated communities spoke in local vernaculars, which differed considerably from the written language.

<sup>63</sup>On certain Armenian characteristics *vid.* the writer's "The Armenians," *Contemporary Review*, CL (July, 1936), 84-92.

discomforting enlightenment. Formerly writers complained bitterly of the lack of any national activity, and criticised the whole nation severely for its indolence and ignorance. Comparing the early nineteenth century Armenian life with the distant past, Leo lamented the decay of nationalism and cast a dark shadow upon the latter period. "There is," he wrote, "no resemblance and no tie between the two; there is no class to carry on the fight for the preservation of our liberating spirit."<sup>64</sup> A similar note was struck by Dzerentz in 1844. He was then told by a Turk that "the Armenians are nothing more than a flock of sheep,"<sup>65</sup> and he had found it difficult to challenge the Turk's statement. In the 'seventies and in the 'eighties, however, expressions of lamentation had given way to exhortations. In one of the first issues of the *Meshak* (in 1872) Ardzrouni hopefully prophesied the impending change. "Yesterday," he wrote, "we were an ecclesiastical community; tomorrow we shall be a nation of workers and thinkers."<sup>66</sup>

It is undeniable that a decade later there was a nation, a nation of "workers and thinkers," and above all a nation of patriots. And the patriots were not only ready for action, but some of them were willing to die. "The tree of liberty," said Mazzini, "does not fructify unless it is planted by the hands of citizens and rendered fertile by the blood of citizens and guarded by the swords of citizens."<sup>67</sup> Armenians had already died in thousands, but not as citizens; only now were they willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause of liberty as citizens. Already an outspoken champion of freedom (M. Nalbanthian) had died in the prison of Petropavlovskaya (near St. Petersburg) in 1866;<sup>68</sup> and in 1881 the innocent but bold Y. M. Dendessian (born in 1834) breathed his last in a prison at Constantinople for publishing a *New Armenian Songbook*.<sup>69</sup> The Armenians realized that Russian autocracy was as much a hindrance to the attainment of their national ideals as was the Ottoman government. And when in 1884 (by a *ukaze* of February 16) the government of the Tsar decreed to put a definite check upon the intellectual life of the Armenians by attempting to bring all secular and parochial Armenian schools under the strict supervision of its agents, then the entire Armenian people in the Russian provinces was ready to defy his government.<sup>70</sup> The decision of the government to close all these schools in the following year, as a measure of punishment, served as an incentive for the people

<sup>64</sup>*The Armenian Printing*, I, 495 (second edition).

<sup>65</sup>*Arevelian Mamoul*, VI (1876), 245.

<sup>66</sup>Quoted in A. Safrastian's "Armenian Thought and Literature Since 1828," *Asiatic Review*, XXVI (1931), 331.

<sup>67</sup>Quoted in B. Croce's *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, 116.

<sup>68</sup>On Nalbanthian *vid.* A. Z.'s "Introduction" to *Michael Nalbanthian's Works* (in Armenian), I.

<sup>69</sup>On Dendessian *vid.* Zartarian, V., *Memorials*, II, 345-53.

<sup>70</sup>For this *ukaze* and its sweeping provisions cf. Ananoun, *op. cit.*, II, 134-45, and also Ormanian, *op. cit.*, III, 4546-9.

to unite among themselves. By this tactless move the Russian government not only lost the loyal support of the Armenians in Russia, but it also antagonized the Armenians everywhere.

Now it was time for the Armenians to take stock. In the Ottoman Empire they were caught between the clutches of the domineering Turks and the nomadic Kurds; in the Russian Empire a definite check was being administered to their intellectual and cultural development. In neither place could they enjoy the freedom that is essential for the full development of the intellect and the realization of their national ideals. Knowledge and learning, and the dawn of self-consciousness had taken them to an *impasse*. And they were as impotent and as helpless as before. The Persian general Mardonius, when fully aware of the presence of a formidable enemy at the decisive battle of Plataea, is reported to have said: "It is hatefulest of all human sorrows to have much knowledge and no power."<sup>1</sup> Some of the Armenians might just as well have confessed their impotence and misfortune. It was for the leaders of the people to decide, whether to abide by an inescapable fate and suffer as in the past, or to pursue the only path that is open to all aspiring and subjected peoples. This would be for them a new course, adventurous and most hazardous. But the more bold and the more determined Armenians, preferring, as it seems, a quick and bitter end to one of endless suffering, wanted to follow the new path, though by and large the mass of the people was still at the crossroads, hesitating before the parting of the ways during the mid-'eighties of the nineteenth century.

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<sup>1</sup>Herodotus, Book IX, 16.

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An attempt is made to give herein a fairly adequate, though necessarily incomplete, list of works dealing with the early phase of the Armenian Question in Armenian, English, French, and German. Some Russian titles have also been given. The Armenian titles are given in transliteration, followed by English translation. In each subdivision anonymous and unidentified works are placed at the end.

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